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Through South Africa with the British Association

By J. Stark Browne, F.R.A.S.

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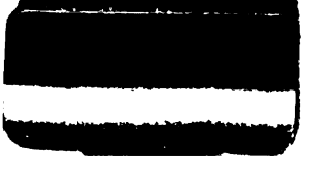

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Through South Africa

with

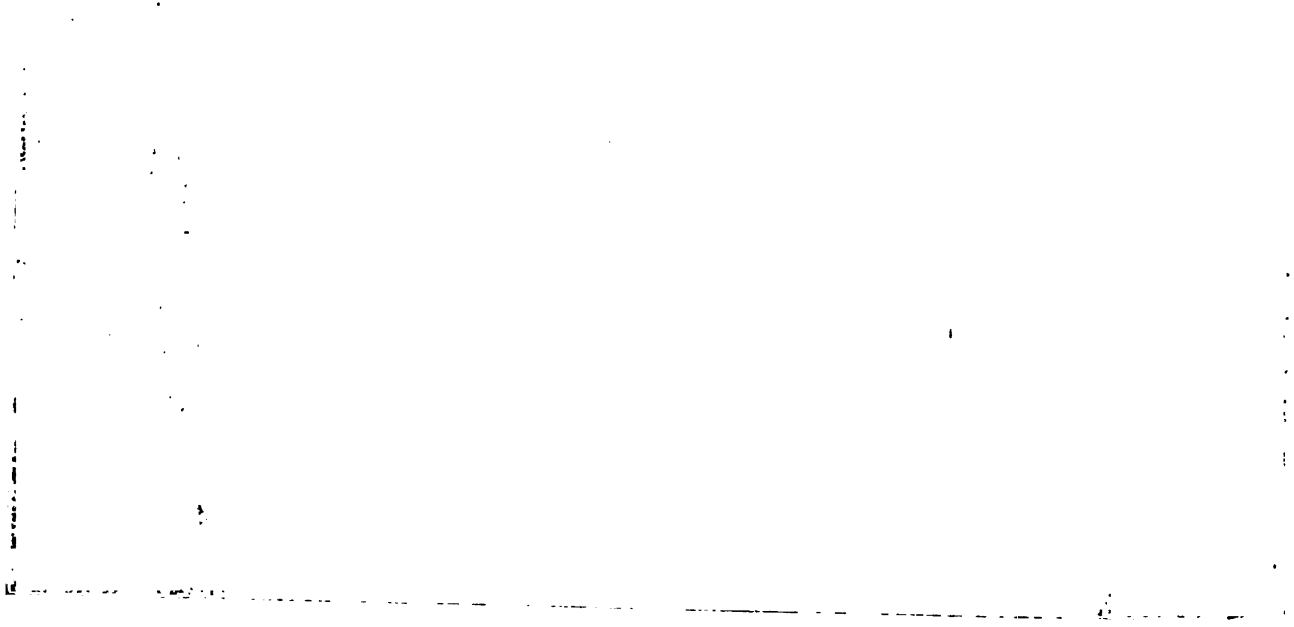
The British Association

for the

Advancement of Science

THE VICTORIA FALLS, VIEW OPPOSITE THE BOILING POT

Frontispiece.]



Frontispiece.] THE VICTORIA FALLS, VIEW OBTAINED FROM [illegible]

Through South Africa

with

The British Association

By

JAMES STARK BROWNE, F.R.A.S.

With Twenty-four Illustrations

JAMES SPEIRS

1 Bloomsbury Street, London

1906

LOAN STACK

DT757
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TO MY DEAR FATHER

WHO FOLLOWED

WITH SO MUCH INTEREST

THE TRIP DESCRIBED

IN THESE

PAGES

Preface

DURING the course of the trip described in these pages I kept a fragmentary diary of the chief events as they occurred. I also wrote letters home, descriptive of those details of the journey which I thought would interest my family.

On my return it was suggested that I should combine the diary and the letters into a more complete story of what had been a most interesting and unique trip. This I have attempted to do in the following pages. At intervals I have added certain reflections that were impressed upon me during the journey, when the incidents that brought them up were fresh in my mind. For any opinions so expressed I am alone responsible.

My object, however, has not been to write a book of impressions of South Africa: that is a task I leave to more competent members of our party. Nor have I attempted to write a full and exhaustive account of all the incidents of the British Association's tour. It can be readily understood that when so many and varied opportunities were afforded us to make visits to places of interest, it was impossible to avail myself of them all: time would only permit of my selecting those which most appealed to me.

For instance, in Cape Town I elected to go with the excursion to Somerset West to see over the De Beers Explosive Works, on the same day that a great number of our party chose to accept the invitation of the Automobile Club for a ride of forty miles round Hout's Bay to see the magnificent scenery of the Cape of Good Hope. Or again,

while I was making the trek across the veldt from Bloemfontein to Kimberley, described in this book, the great majority of our members journeyed thither by rail.

I was, therefore, necessarily obliged to forego the pleasure of many experiences which others enjoyed, and of these I have attempted no description, as any information I could give would only be second-hand. I can but claim for my book that it is an account of my own personal experiences during the tour.

I am indebted to Sir William Crookes for kindly revising the chapter "Concerning Diamonds," and to my friend S——, from whose fine collection of photographs some of the illustrations have been prepared. I have also found the many admirable guide-books which were furnished to us by the local authorities invaluable for reference, and have availed myself of much information from their pages.

J. S. B.

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Itinerary

Southampton

Teneriffe
Las Palmas
Capetown
Durban
Pietermaritzburg
Colenso
Ladysmith
Johannesburg
Pretoria
Vereeniging
Bloemfontein
Cronje's Laager, Paardeberg

Kimberley
Bulawayo
Matopo Hills
Victoria Falls
Salisbury
Umtali
Beira
Mozambique
Mombasa
Suez
Cairo
Marseilles

Southampton

Through South Africa with the British Association

CHAPTER I

THE OUTWARD VOYAGE—TENERIFFE

FOR the year 1905 special interest attached to the meeting of the British Association for two reasons. In the first place the president-elect was Professor George H. Darwin, son of the world-renowned Charles Darwin, and himself a scientific man of great ability whose original work in connection with the tides in the solar system has been of great service to astronomy. The King has recently seen fit to reward his eminent services to science with a well-deserved K.C.B. In the second place the gathering of 1905, unlike most of the Association's meetings which are usually held in the United Kingdom, was to take place in South Africa.

The British Association had been invited by the South African Colonies to meet on their continent, and extensive arrangements had been made to give them a welcome worthy of the love for the mother country which the colonies entertained; and of the importance of the scientific body about to visit their shores. The different colonies

and dependencies vied with one another to make the visit a pleasant and instructive one, and all laid themselves out to entertain their guests in royal fashion. A very considerable sum of money had been voted to help to defray the expenses of many of the visitors who, although eminent in science, might be poor in pocket. Each colony gave special facilities and privileges which wonderfully smoothed the long and toilsome journey across South Africa, and enabled its guests to see all that there was of interest with the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of expense and discomfort.

The trip was to extend right up to the world-renowned Victoria Falls on the Zambesi; a portion of the dark continent, only lately opened up to civilization, and the famous bridge across the gorge below the falls was being completed with all speed so that its formal opening might take place on the occasion of the Association's visit. There was a glamour and romance about such a trip that appealed to every one, and about four hundred members of the Association availed themselves of this unique opportunity to visit the Southern Hemisphere, a fairly large number to undertake a trip which was to cover 17,000 miles and to last for three months.

It was suggested to the Union Castle Steamship Co., who were taking out the party in their splendid steamers, that it would add greatly to the interest of the trip if the return journey could be made by the east coast of Africa from the port of Beira. This suggestion was adopted by the Company, and they detailed one of their newest steamers, the *Durham Castle*, to make the round journey. Over two hundred of the members arranged to return in this way, and plans were drawn up to enable the ship to call at several places of interest on the east coast, and

also in Egypt, thus adding immensely to the charm and completeness of the trip. The captain and officers of the *Durham Castle* did their best to make the sea portion of the long journey pleasant to all.

The oversea members of the British Association left England in three parties; the first two on July 22, 1905, in the Union Castle steamers, the *Kildonan Castle* and the *Durham Castle,* and the last party on July 29, in the *Saxon,* belonging to the same line. I had taken my ticket by the *Durham Castle,* and booked for the round passage *via* Beira and the east coast, sharing cabin 12 with my friend T—— S——. The cabin was on deck and well to the front of the vessel on the port side, where we enjoyed plenty of air and light and were very comfortable, and we retained the same berths until our return to Southampton three months later. It is surprising with how little room one can make shift very comfortably for several weeks at a stretch.

Probably most people have at some time or other taken a sea voyage, and know something of the sort of life that is led on these ocean hotels. It is usually life under two aspects, that experienced in calm weather, and that which has to be endured when stormy winds blow and heavy seas cause the ship to pitch and toss. Of the latter aspect of life on board ship I have little to say in this narrative. Our trip both outward and homeward was one unbroken record of smooth weather. The great ocean itself seemed to enter into the spirit of the occasion and proved more than usually kind to its guests, for during our whole voyage of 15,000 miles round the continent of Africa not one really rough spell was experienced. On no one day of the nine weeks that we were on board the *Durham Castle* did we need to use fiddles on

the dining tables. Old seagoers will appreciate from this fact how quiet our long voyage must have been.

Fiddles, I may explain for the ininitiated, are strips of wood which are fastened along and across the tables in order to divide them up into a sort of chess-board pattern. The object is to make squares in which the plates and dishes can rest fairly steadily when the ship rolls or pitches. Otherwise, everything would slide off the tables, and even with such protection eating in comfort in very rough weather is often a matter of great difficulty. As a rule but few go through this experience in the saloon, the usual custom in rough weather being a course of abstinence, taken alone, in the unsteady seclusion of one's own cabin.

But none of these terrors of the sea were for us; our sixty-two days of ocean life were almost monotonous in their smoothness. On many a day, for all we felt to the contrary, we might have been resting in harbour, so quietly did we move along.

Our party was a large one, for there were on board about two hundred passengers, the greater number being members of the British Association. Such a gathering naturally took some time to thaw, for, I suppose, every one was afraid of the ability and cleverness of everybody else, and well they might be, for nearly all had some letters after their names, many with F.R.S., M.A., D.Sc., or other such distinctions. Therefore for the first few days no one took any initiative in starting games or entertainments, and we spent the time mostly in getting acquainted with one another. There was a fair library on board, but the demand on its resources was great, and being late in applying I found its most attractive books already taken out. But I had brought some literature

with me, and could make shift without the library for a time.

On our fifth day out we were near the latitude of Mogador, and were feeling the increase in the temperature. I remembered how, on my last visit to the Canary Islands, I had been struck by the colour of the sea in this region, and the impression now produced was the same. The beauty and intensity of its blueness defy description, and I felt that if in a sea-picture the water should be painted like the reality, most people would exclaim that the colour was overdone.

I was up before sunrise next morning in order to see our entrance into Santa Cruz harbour. The skies were brilliant with stars flashing in all directions; but the crowning glory were the planets Venus and Jupiter, shining close to the small crescent of the waning moon. All three were so near together that they could almost be seen in the same field of view in my opera-glasses. Not far off shone the constellation of Orion, very much more on its side than when seen in England. Sirius was beside it, and other brilliant and well-known stars were blazing all over the heavens.

The lights of Santa Cruz could be seen glimmering in the distance ahead, and growing perceptibly brighter. I was soon joined by many others of our friends, until we formed a fairly large party in pyjamas, great-coats, and dressing-gowns, and many ladies in various forms of dishabille, for the morning was warm.

Presently the eastern horizon behind us began to be touched with light, which even as we gazed increased and grew brighter spreading swiftly up to the zenith, until we saw the first glimpses of the rising sun appear above the sea. There was not much twilight in this latitude, and

the darkness gave place to daylight very quickly. The picture over Santa Cruz, and the land we were rapidly approaching, was a very fine one as the dawn crept on. First a pale pink tint covered everything, mountains, sea, and sleeping town; then it changed to deep red, beautifully reflected from all the white houses which had suddenly sprung into view. We saw in the distance the Peak of Teneriffe, just catching the warm glow on its top. Gradually the light on the town changed to orange, next to yellow; then it grew paler and paler, until the bright glow of the risen sun shone white on everything and it was full day. Many were the exclamations of wonder and admiration as this glorious panorama unfolded itself.

By six o'clock we were at anchor in the bay and boats from the shore came off to us; but no one was allowed to come on board, nor could any one leave the ship until we had received our clean bill of health from the quarantine doctor. Incoming vessels fly a yellow flag, and this must not be hauled down until the vessel has been passed as free from infectious disease. We had come from a healthy port, and were free from illness of any sort, so our yellow flag soon came down after the port doctor had visited us.

Some of our passengers went on shore; but as we were staying at Santa Cruz for only two hours, and I had on my previous visit spent two days in the town, I did not consider it worth while accompanying them. It was more interesting to stay and watch the life and excitement around the ship, which bid fair to be of a very entertaining nature.

All sorts and conditions of vendors of wares crowded in their little boats, offering fruit, wickerwork, and especially drawn-thread Teneriffe work for sale. A few only

were allowed to come on deck; the rest had to make shift as best they could by displaying their attractions from their boats. This was a rather difficult thing to do, especially when the wares were large delicate table-cloths, or bed-spreads. The men who had come on deck did a fair business; but I scarcely think the poor vendors in the boats realized sufficient to pay for their expenditure of time and energy, although they were certainly most persevering. All sales were made by bargaining; no one seemed to be expected to give the prices asked, and generally about two-thirds was accepted.

Boys dived for coins, despising the humble coppers, but keenly on the alert for anything of the colour of silver. This branch of industry seemed to be a thriving one, for a large number of coins were tossed into the sea, and I did not notice that any of the sharp, naked little urchins failed to recover them. One enterprising lad climbed by a rope on to our upper deck, a height of over forty feet, and made a very clean dive therefrom for a shilling which he easily captured.

CHAPTER II

LAS PALMAS—INCIDENTS OF THE VOYAGE

We left Teneriffe at half-past eight, and when well out at sea we had a magnificent view of the famous Peak standing boldly out in the clear morning air. We were bound for Las Palmas in the Grand Canary, which island was in sight from Teneriffe. There we dropped anchor soon after lunch, and small boats took us all ashore.

A long, very badly kept up, and rather uninteresting road of about three miles leads from the harbour to the town. Most people prefer to drive this distance, especially when the sun is intensely hot, as it was on the day when we were there.

In the town we visited the cathedral, and afterwards, meeting some friends with a guide, we joined them for a ramble round the place. The guide turned out a fraud, and took us to shops instead of to sights, so that among other things we missed seeing the very interesting museum with its many remains of the ancient people of the Canary Islands. Still the walk was interesting, for we saw the native life of the town, and much strange vegetation, bananas in fruit, date and other palms, and some fine specimens of eucalyptus trees. We also visited the market, where fruit was very plentiful and cheap.

We were back on the boat by six o'clock and left soon after. Coming on deck when we had finished dinner,

we had a perfect view of the planet Mercury, shining in the midst of the orange glow of the lovely sunset. Mercury is a very shy planet, and huddled so close to the sun that it can rarely be seen; either it is lost in the glare, or hidden by the mists of the horizon. To the north Cassiopeia was quite low down, as were also the Plough and Polaris.

The planet Mars was high in the heavens, and later in the evening Saturn rose in the east. So in one day I had seen five planets, Venus, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, and Saturn, as well as the crescent moon; a rather unusual combination of no less than six members of our solar system. Very few of the southern constellations were, as yet, recognizable. Scorpio, however, was a brilliant exception, shining directly ahead, entangled in the haze of the Milky Way.

On Sunday, July 30, which was one of our hottest days, we ran into a belt of sharks. Before breakfast a great number of flying-fish had been seen in all directions. They had a silvery appearance as they flitted across the water, and though they did not rise high, they often covered some hundreds of feet before taking to the sea again. After breakfast no flying-fish were visible, but sharks of the hammer-headed variety could be seen everywhere, for the water seemed to be alive with them. It was easy to count a dozen or more in sight at one time, and they were quite indifferent to the vessel, coming close enough to give us fine views of their ugly forms. Their heads were exactly like hammers, with their eyes at each extremity, while all the intermediate space was occupied by their vicious mouths which, however, being underneath could not be seen as they swam.

Professor Penck, of Vienna University, one of our

foreign guests, with a German's love for detail, had watchers stationed in different positions on the ship, to count all they saw in a given time, and from these data he made a calculation that the sharks in sight averaged two hundred to the square kilometer, or about one million in all in the shark belt through which we were passing. We could not but speculate on the lively but short career in store for any one who should happen to fall overboard.

Later on in the day, when the sharks had disappeared, we saw a very large school of porpoises, and passing close to them found their gambols mildly exciting to watch. There were so many that long after we had passed by, indeed, when they were more than a mile or two away, they could still be seen from the splashing they made, which looked, in the distance, like surf breaking over a coral reef.

On this day the sun was exactly overhead at noon, and some passengers took photographs of others standing shadowless.

The next few days were much cooler, and with even a little rain at times. The wind was stronger; we had a slight movement of the ship, and a few passengers thought they ought to be ill; but the sea could not be called in any sense rough. At times the air was quite chilly, and it was plain that we had done with the excessive heat. We were soon well within the trade-winds, and the officers foretold similar weather for some days to come.

Sports, and competitions in all sorts of deck games, went on every day, and great excitement prevailed as to the results. The intense earnestness of some of our learned professors, as to the proper pitching of quoits into buckets, was very amusing to watch. These childish,

but for board ship really useful and necessary, games seemed to absorb their whole souls. What should we do on a long voyage without recreation of this sort? It was not possible to sit and talk or read all day long, and any excuse for movement and exercise was beneficial.

The evenings were filled up with dances, concerts, or lectures on some subjects of interest, and on one occasion an original play was performed on deck. It was a clever piece of foolery, well acted, and among the company our Japanese member, Koyata Iwasaki, distinguished himself by his admirable get-up. He acted a Chinese pirate and his Mongolian face helped him immensely. I cannot describe the plot, if plot there was any; it would read too stupidly, for all the fun was in the acting and the topical jokes, while the printed programme was the cleverest part of the entertainment—its many sly skits upon passengers and upon little incidents of the voyage being often very funny.

And so the days slipped by, one after the other, as we crossed the great ocean on our way to South Africa. Each was much like all the rest, save for the minor incidents of ship life, interesting enough to us at the time but scarcely worth recapitulating. The officers were right about the weather, for the heat had passed for good; the ducks and light suits disappeared, and on the day we crossed the line many of us were to be seen in great-coats. We felt constrained to tell the captain that he had missed the way and taken us to the North Pole instead of to the tropics. But on the whole the cooler weather was agreeable, for we could move about with more pleasure, throw ourselves with more zest into our sports, and joke one another upon the 'tropical heat.'

We crossed the equator on August 4, and on the same

evening had a debate in the saloon on *The Yellow Peril, is it a reality to be feared?* It was opened in the negative by Dr. Divers, F.R.S., and spoken to on the same side by Professor Coleman, Dr. Gaskell, F.R.S., Professor Penck, Professor von Luschan, and our Japanese friend Iwasaki; while almost alone Oscar Browning held to the affirmative position. His speech was a glowing eulogy on the Russians and their institutions, very clever and interesting; but nothing to do with the question. The remarks of Iwasaki were given in a slow hesitating manner, owing, I suppose, to his difficulties with our language. He amused us much by saying that the 'heat' of the tropics had affected our brains, or we should not have wasted an evening discussing such a subject. We should probably be all right again, he thought, when we got back to England.

We considered the speech of the evening was made by Professor von Luschan, who also spoke English with a little difficulty. He was a most interesting man to talk to, having directed several Syrian exploration parties, and upon these subjects was 'full of matter.' In his speech he welcomed the rise of Japan as an immense gain to the thought of the world. He considered their Bushido code to be higher than our Christian one, at any rate as taught by our Churches; and he thought that we should greatly benefit by intercourse with the ideas of a young and vigorous nation. Recent events foreshadowed an awakening of Europeans to the truth that they had not a monopoly of all the virtues in religion. He compared Japanese culture and common-sense with the miserable superstition and ikon-worship of the Greek and Roman Churches, and he traced the effects of their faiths upon the characters of the different nations.

His speech was much applauded, for I need scarcely say that with such a party as ours the broadest views prevailed on religious questions, and it was like a breath of fresh air to talk to some of our companions on these subjects.

Speaking to him next day, I found he was reading a new work upon the Bushmen of South Africa, and was much interested in the subject, and also in the accounts of the ancient Rhodesian ruins of Zimbabwe and elsewhere. He inclined to the belief that they were probably of Malay origin, and were not excessively old.

On other evenings we had lectures by various members of our party. Dr. P. L. Sclater, F.R.S., late of the Zoological Gardens, London, talked to us on two occasions about animals. Professor Coleman, of Toronto, told us all about Canadian exploration, describing the several methods by means of which the great primeval forests and boundless prairies of the Dominion have been opened up. It was a splendid story of what the courage and perseverance of our race have been able to achieve under extremely difficult conditions; and it was greatly appreciated by a large and attentive audience.

Our friend Captain Wakefield lectured to us on *Banking,* and A. Trevor-Battye described the conditions of *Life in the Arctic Regions* from personal observations during an exploring expedition. The humorous element was introduced by Professor Reynolds Green, F.R.S., who gave us a discourse on *Phrenology.* He was intensely serious, and did an admirable bit of fooling with the air of a dry professor at a college class. The heads he selected as illustrations were exaggerated reproductions of those of Julius Cæsar, Dick Turpin, and a fancy portrait of Simple Simon.

Thus the time slipped pleasantly by, for agreeable companions and a calm sea can make the longest voyage enjoyable. During the last week we scarcely saw a ship; the ocean seemed quite deserted, and it was wonderful to think of the vast expanse of water we were passing over. Our isolation gave us a very vivid idea of the size of the great Atlantic, for though many vessels were upon it, there was room for all to sail their several courses far out of sight of one another. At last, about three days before reaching Table Bay, we passed the homeward bound Union Castle liner out from Cape Town, and there was great excitement among our passengers, and much snapshotting and spoiling of camera films, for these distant pictures were rarely a success. One would have thought we had never seen a steamer before.

And now we came to Saturday, August 12, and were to be in Cape Town early on the following Monday morning. The prizes for sports and games won on the voyage were presented during the evening by Lady Leech, assisted by Sir Bosdin Leech, who made a happy little speech. My friend S—— won the chess and draughts prizes and well deserved them, for his playing was magnificent. He had played a game of chess blindfolded, earlier in the voyage, and easily beaten his opponent, setting a clever trap which caught him nicely.

On Sunday, which was our last day, the vessel had more movement than during the whole voyage, but as we did not need to use fiddles on the dining-tables the sea could not by any means be called rough. It was only giving us a little reminder that we were not yet on shore. We learned afterwards that the *Saxon*, which followed a day behind us, experienced much rougher weather on this and the succeeding day and had been obliged to use

fiddles at meals on both days. It seemed as though we were fated to escape all unpleasantness of this sort. Several whales were seen during the day, probably visitors from the Antarctic Ocean.

A subdued feeling of excitement pervaded the ship, combined with an inability to settle down to anything long, and every one took care to see that his packing up was well forward, for we were to reach harbour by daybreak.

CHAPTER III

ARRIVAL AT CAPE TOWN—PROFESSOR DARWIN'S ADDRESS

THE morning of August 14 was cold and wet, and looking out from my cabin window I could see nothing but fog. The ship was moving slowly, and a more cheerless and unpromising prospect it was difficult to imagine. It was scarcely light when I reached the deck, and dimly ahead of us could be just discerned the glimmer of a lighthouse beacon.

As the morning grew greyer the mist cleared somewhat, and the shore could be seen standing out to view through the rain and the haze. It was most unfortunate that our first sight of land should be under such dismal circumstances; for had the weather been fine we should have had a magnificent view of the glorious panorama as we approached from the sea. As it was, Table Mountain looked like a wraith but dimly visible through its misty shroud, and we could not see it well until we were quite close to land. We did not get another opportunity of seeing the coast scenery from the sea to better advantage, for when we left Cape Town a week later it was nighttime and nothing at all was visible.

The temperature was so cold on deck that the thickest clothes and great-coats were necessary, and it was a pleasant change when the breakfast bugle called us down into the warm saloon. Dock was reached by nine o'clock,

and as we entered we saw on the south arm, to our left, the long rows of temporary buildings which had been used for military purposes during the war. There was ample accommodation in the basins for large vessels to lie alongside the quays, the water area covering no less than seventy-seven acres.

We were immediately boarded by the harbour authorities, who gave us the pleasant news that there would be no Customs examination of our baggage. We had merely to sign a printed document that any cameras we had brought with us would be taken out of the country when we left South Africa. They also told us that all our luggage for the shore would be looked after by the Harbour Board and delivered free to any address we might direct, and when we left Cape Town it would be collected and returned to the ship in the same way. This was our first experience of the kindness and hospitality which our South African friends so lavishly extended to us throughout our tour on their continent.

Quitting the ship, which had for three weeks been our very comfortable home, S—— and I went on shore, where a special train waited to take us to the town station. Here we jumped into a cab and were quickly driven to our selected hotel, 'The International,' pleasantly situated on rising ground at the back of the town and at the foot of Table Mountain. T—— S—— had already engaged rooms at the 'Mount Nelson' hotel, so we were not together during our stay at the Cape. We secured comfortable apartments, and the rain having ceased and the sun shining brightly, we walked to our reception-rooms in the New City Hall.

This building had only just been opened for our visit, and was still in many parts far from finished. It is a

handsome structure in the Italian Renaissance style, with a fine central clock-tower about 200 feet high. The exterior is built of Bath stone on a granite base, and the whole forms an imposing structure, fronting as it does upon four streets. Electric trams for our hotel passed close by. Here, amid a scene of great bustle and excitement, our names were booked and we obtained tickets and seats for the lectures, and various other papers and books were given us, including a very useful and nicely illustrated and bound guide to Cape Town and Colony, which had been specially prepared for our visit.

At the door of the hall on leaving I ran across A——, whom I did not at first recognize, but remembered afterwards as a member of our 'Swan of Avon' Society in London a few years ago. He was then acting as secretary to Lord C—— and had left us to go to South Africa. He accompanied our party as far as the Victoria Falls, and at various places on the journey he helped S—— and myself very much in our choice of trips and excursions, owing to his local knowledge, and to the fact that the lists given to select from sometimes embarrassed us by their profusion of opportunities. Our thanks are due to him for all the kindness he showed to us.

By one o'clock we found our way back to the hotel to lunch, and had our first experience of a South African meal. We recognized then (our first experience was amply confirmed later on) that the diet in the colonies was not going to be as good as we were accustomed to in England, for the meats were harder and less tasty than at home. Our appetites, however, were good, and we found the meal a pleasant change after the monotony of the ship's food, which, although first-class, had begun to pall upon us by its sameness.

After lunch we walked through the Botanical Gardens to the Library and the Museum, and saw the fine Houses of Parliament on the way. In the Museum a kindly lady-assistant showed us over, pointing out things of greatest interest including the workroom, or laboratory, where the specimens were set up. In it were several bones of a recently discovered huge South African dinosaur, a creature the nearest approach probably to a mammal of all the giant lizards. We saw, also, a splendid specimen of the great white rhinoceros, an enormous creature, almost as large as an elephant. In another room there was an exhibition of relics found at Zimbabwe, in Rhodesia, and copies of some fine Bushmen's drawings.

In the Botanical Gardens we were much interested by the sub-tropical vegetation; and particularly noticed the absence of anything approaching our English turf; all the grass being of a large coarse variety of a greyish-green colour. It was strange to see the trees so bare of leaves, with the buds swelling just ready to burst, when, but three weeks before, we had left everything in England in the full luxuriance of summer foliage.

Curious clusters of hanging nests on some of the trees interested us; they were ball-shaped with the entrance at the bottom, and were hanging at the extremities of long thin twigs, swaying and dangling to every breath of air. Their owners, the weaver-birds, were flying in and out, and making a great noise; they were about the size of thrushes, with a great deal of yellow about their breasts.

Owing to the copious morning's rain everything looked sweet and fresh—the air was brisk and cool, and it was a pleasure to walk about after our long confinement. Low clouds, however, hung over Table Mountain and seemed to threaten more rain later on.

We spent the evening at the theatre, where *The Orchid* was being played by a company from the Gaiety in London, a good performance which we much enjoyed. Returning to the hotel soon after eleven, I found my luggage had not been delivered, and as all the others had received theirs, mine had evidently gone astray. This was most awkward, for I had nothing whatever with me and was stranded in a strange place without even a clean collar to fall back upon. Our host and S—— offered to lend me whatever I required, and the former promised to communicate with the Harbour Board by telephone the first thing in the morning.

Owing, I think, partly to this loss and partly because I missed the movement of the ship to which I had grown so accustomed during our three weeks' voyage, my first night in South Africa was very restless and disturbed. So I was up early the next morning and found the sun shining in a cloudless sky, and everything giving promise of a perfect day. The air was quite cold at first, but the sun soon had sufficient strength to warm it pleasantly.

After breakfast, hearing that my luggage had been found—it having been delivered to a namesake, John Brown, F.R.S., who was located at Kenilworth, some distance out of Cape Town—and that it would be sent up by special van as soon as possible, we walked down to the reception rooms and obtained our letters from home, which had just arrived by the *Saxon*. A large party of our members, including most of the notables, had also come by the same steamer, so that the rooms were much crowded and an air of excitement pervaded the place. The letters and papers gave us news up to July 28, and we were delighted to get them, although they had been written only a few days after our departure.

After this I walked across to Adderley Street to call upon my friend Mr. F—— at the post-office, and on the staircase I met Mrs. F—— with her little boy, and arranged to see her again later on in her husband's office and accompany them home to Sea Point. This is a suburb to the west of Cape Town, on the stretch of shore lying between Lion Mountain and the sea.

At the City Hall Sir David Gill, F.R.A.S., on behalf of the different colonies, handed to all members of the Association free railway passes over the Cape, the Natal and the Central South African Railways, the passes being first-class with sleeping berths—and available for two months. I found that Sir Bosdin Leech had already booked S—— and myself to share a compartment with him, which we were to retain all the way from Durban to the Victoria Falls. Only three seats and berths were to be occupied in our carriage, the rest of the space being reserved for our hand luggage, and other belongings.

When I met the F——s later on we decided, as the afternoon was so fine, to make our way to Sea Point by the longer route across the Kloof Nek and through Camp's Bay, in order that I might have an opportunity of seeing the country at the side of Table Mountain and along the coast. It proved a delightful ride through most charming scenery, especially across the Nek and as we descended to Camp's Bay. There, on our left, was the great mountain itself, while beyond it, to the south, rising one after another were twelve peaks locally known as the Twelve Apostles.

To our right lay the open sea with its fine, large rollers dashing on to the shore. Along the road and in all the ditches we saw thousands of arum lilies which, like weeds, seem to grow wild all over the Cape peninsula. So pro-

fusely did they grow that, instead of seeking to cultivate them, most people experienced some difficulty in keeping them out of their gardens. The sun was warm and brilliant, the temperature fresh and bracing, the afternoon was an ideal one, and it was a luxury to breathe, and move about amid such exquisite surroundings. We reached Sea Point by five o'clock, where the F——s had a pretty little bungalow at the top of London Road, at the further end of which the ocean was in sight.

I was obliged to leave soon after tea for our great meeting in the City Hall, when Professor G. H. Darwin was to deliver his presidential address.

A gay scene was presented by the great hall, filled as it was by our large oversea party and a great number of the members of the South African Association for the Advancement of Science, and other colonials. On the platform among others were His Excellency Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson (the Governor), Professor Darwin, Sir William Crookes, Sir David Gill (the Cape Astronomer), Sir John Buchanan (acting Chief Justice), the Earl of Rosse, the late Sir Richard Jebb, M.P., the Archbishop of Cape Town, Mr. H. Liebermann (the Mayor), and many more distinguished visitors and residents.

Sir William Crookes, in introducing the new president, alluded to the splendid voyage to South Africa which the British Association had just made in luxury and comfort. He compared this fact with the remarks made by a Mr. Dionysius Lardner to an early meeting of the Association, at the time when steamship traffic was just being talked about between England and America, and in which he declared that it was impossible for any steamship ever to cross the Atlantic, because, if she were crammed chokefull of coal, she could never take more than would carry

her 2,000 miles. The speaker considered that the wonderful voyage we had just achieved could never have been accomplished had it not been for the encouragement and assistance to science which the British Association, among others, had always given since that early date. He further alluded to a letter sent by the retiring president, the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, who was then Premier of England, regretting that pressure of work, in another place, prevented him from being present in person to welcome Professor Darwin, one of his oldest friends, on such an auspicious occasion. Sir William Crookes did not think it could be necessary for him to introduce to such a gathering as he saw before him any one bearing the name of Darwin, the son of the man who had done for the organic world what Newton had done for that of inorganic matter. Professor Darwin was the worthy son of a world-renowned father.

The President, in his opening remarks, alluded to Bartholomew Diaz, the discoverer of the Cape, stating how he spent no less than sixteen months on the voyage, while, as late as 1497, Vasco da Gama took more than four months to sail from Lisbon to Table Bay. How great were the dangers of such a voyage in those days might be gathered from the fact that less than half the men who set out with Vasco da Gama lived to return to Lisbon. Now, 408 years later a ship of 13,000 tons (the *Saxon*) had brought them to South Africa in comfort and luxury in little more than a fortnight.

'How striking were the contrasts presented! On the one hand, compare the courage, the endurance, and the persistence of the early navigators with the little that had been demanded of us; on the other hand, consider how much man's powers over the forces of nature had been augmented during the past four centuries. Such thoughts made us sometimes fear that perhaps we might be but degenerate descendants

of those who had gone before. Still we might be justly proud of the improvement in our conditions due to the successive efforts of each generation to add to the heritage of knowledge handed down to it by its predecessors, whereby we have been born to the accumulated endowment of centuries of genius and labour.

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'To us living men, who scarcely pass a year of our lives without witnessing some new marvel of discovery or invention, the rate at which the development of knowledge proceeds is truly astonishing; but from a wider point of view the scale of time is relatively unimportant, for the universe is leisurely in its procedure. Whether the changes which we witness be fast or slow, they form a part of a long sequence of events which began in some past of immeasurable remoteness, and tend to some end which we cannot foresee. It must always be profoundly interesting to the mind of man to trace successive cause and effect, in the chain of events which make up the history of the earth and all that lives on it, and to speculate on the origin and future fate of animals, and of planets, suns, and stars.'

Professor Darwin's address dealt with the subject of evolution in inanimate nature, and was listened to with marked attention by the large and appreciative audience. At its conclusion Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer; he also gave to all the oversea members of the Association a warm and hearty welcome to South Africa. He considered the visit was a great and permanent step towards drawing closer together the bonds of the brotherhood of science between his Majesty's sons in South Africa and in the Motherland.

Sir David Gill in seconding, alluded to the presidential address delivered last year at Cambridge by Mr. A. J. Balfour, which he styled a 'mental gymnastic display,' and quoted Huxley's remark, that 'the first sign of mental degeneracy in a scientific man was that he turned to philosophy.' Strangely enough, the last address ever given by Huxley himself was a tissue of philosophy. He

(Sir David) stated how for the twenty-six years of his residence in the country, he had cherished the dream that they would one day entertain the British Association in South Africa. There was no country in the world that owed so much to science, and he was glad to see that they were now going to repay part of the debt.

Professor Darwin, in his reply on behalf of the Association, thanked his Excellency and Sir David Gill for their cordial words of welcome. Just before he left England he saw Mr. Balfour, who had agreed with him that a somewhat wider significance than usual attached to the present meeting of the British Association. He regretted the absence of Lord Kelvín and Sir Frank McLean, both of whom had intended to be present, but the former was only just recovering from a very severe illness. He expressed the gratification that his progress towards health was so satisfactory.

The meeting ended at 10.30, after which S—— and I walked back to our hotel discussing the matter of the presidential address. It was a lovely starlight night, and right ahead of us, and just over Table Mountain, shone the Southern Cross with its two pointers, Alpha and Beta Centauri. The magellanic clouds could not well be seen owing to the glare of the moon. Indeed, I did not see them properly until on board ship going to Durban.

CHAPTER IV

EXCURSIONS TO GROOTE SCHUUR, KLOOF NEK, THE OBSERVATORY, DYNAMITE WORKS

THE next day, after visiting the reception rooms, S—— and I went by tram to Groote Schuur, to see the late Cecil Rhodes's house and park. It was a bright sunny morning, and promised a fine day, but later the sky clouded over and rain threatened. The house was approached by a long avenue of eucalyptus trees; and masses of arum lilies, growing wild all over the place and just coming into bloom, carpeted the ground. By the side of the house was a fruit and flower garden, prettily laid out, and there we took photographs of what was, indeed, a lovely specimen of old Dutch architecture. We asked to be allowed to see the interior, and, on stating that we were members of the British Association, received cordial permission. The property now belongs to Dr. Jameson, who was absent in England owing to ill health. We learned that several members of our Association were staying as guests in the house. The interior was most interesting, being decorated in old Dutch style, and full of choice furniture to match, all in excellent taste. In Cecil Rhodes's library, his favourite room, were a number of curios, such as Dr. Jameson's 'Raid' flag; the Union Jack which was buried at Pretoria on the surrender of Majuba, and dug up by

the English after Lord Roberts's entry in 1900; Lobengula's gun and elephant seal (of the latter we were given impressions); also a number of relics from Zimbabwe, including a crucible with specks of gold still in it, and many pictures of the ruins. In the library were hundreds of type-written books, copies from valuable originals in the British Museum. We saw, also, a splendid old door from the Castle in Cape Town, and in the dining-room some very fine tapestries; up-stairs we went into Rhodes's bed-room, where was the bed on which he lay in state before his funeral, and which has never since been used. At the back of the house there was a long verandah or 'stoep.' These stoeps are common features of most of the better class houses in South Africa, this one at Groote Schuur being a particularly handsome specimen.

We walked through the park to see the wild animals in their enclosures, but as it soon began to rain we could not linger long, and had to hurry on to Mowbray station to catch a train, this being an alternative route to Cape Town.

In the afternoon, the weather having cleared, S—— and I walked to Government House to the Governor's garden-party. Unfortunately, just as we got there, the rain began again and continued for most of the afternoon, which was disappointing, for it spoilt the charm of the gardens, while the refreshments had to be provided in the house instead of in the tents erected in the grounds. The sun shone out just before we left, so that for the last half-hour we were able to walk about outside, and admire some of the new and strange flowers. Bright scarlet seemed a very common colour in South African gardens.

In the evening we went to the Mayor's reception in the City Hall; there meeting Sir David Gill, and mentioning

that I had failed to obtain a ticket for his garden-party at the Observatory on Friday afternoon, he personally gave me a warm invitation to be present. The great hall was crowded, and it was difficult to move about in comfort.

During the evening, to my astonishment, I met Miss S—— who used to teach my children at the Princess Helena College, in Ealing, some eight or ten years ago; her sister was with her (one being engaged in teaching, the other in nursing), and they were very pleased to see some one from home. They had just returned from the Victoria Falls, and were loud in their praises of its beauties: as for the climate, they had not found the heat too great while there. The new organ was played at intervals during the evening; it was a splendid instrument, but it struck us as being too loud for the hall. About ten o'clock, S—— and I walked slowly back to our hotel, talking about the stars which shone very beautifully, although their extreme brilliancy was somewhat dimmed by the rising moon.

I spent Thursday morning attending some of the meetings in Section A on astronomical subjects, also, later on, I called on Mr. S——, to whom I had a letter of introduction, and had a long talk with him about the prospects of Rhodesia. He was not hopeful of its agricultural future while there was so much difficulty in getting English emigrants to settle on the land. However good and cheap it was, they soon grew tired of the isolation and threw up the work. He considered the Scandinavians made much better permanent settlers than the English. Later on, he introduced me to Mr. Molyneux from Buluwayo, and asked him to look to my comfort when we reached Rhodesia.

CAMP'S BAY, CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

During the afternoon I joined a botanical excursion to explore the Kloof Nek and Lion Mountain. The tram-car took us up to the Nek, and from thence we rambled along the slopes of the mountain, gathering flowers, digging up bulbs, picking sprays from the lovely silver-leaf trees, or taking photographs. Our local guide informed us that no less than 2,000 varieties of wild flowers grew within a few miles around Cape Town, and as many as 300 specimens of heaths alone. The season was yet early for most of these; we were quite a month too soon; in a few weeks' time the place would literally be carpeted with the loveliest flowers—so he informed us. Even as early as it was, we saw many growing like weeds, which in England we look to find only in our conservatories.

Hanging over Table Mountain was a covering of mist, locally called its 'table-cloth'—for the appearance was strangely in keeping with the name—covering the top and falling in a dense white sheet some distance down the sides. We were told that when this was seen, it was generally a sign of an approaching south-easter.

We descended the mountain on the side towards Camp's Bay, in the face of a very strong wind, which had suddenly sprung up, and which, combined with the roughness of the ground, made our descent difficult and tiring. The wind was so boisterous that we could not face it the nearest way down, but had to take shelter as much as we could among the scrub that grew in a chine some distance from our path, where we managed to get up a few specimens of bulbous roots to take home with us. When we arrived at Camp's Bay the rollers were tumbling in on shore in such grand style that I tried to photograph them. The attempt was hopeless, the wind was so strong, and the driving sand so blinding that I was nearly blown into the

sea when I ventured too close, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I managed to fight my way back to the road. An hour afterwards the wind dropped almost as quickly as it had risen. I found all over South Africa that frequently a heavy wind would spring up about three o'clock and quiet down again just before sunset.

I made the round journey back to Cape Town, viâ Sea Point as before, and in the evening went to the City Hall to hear Professor Poulton's lecture on W. J. Burchell's discoveries in South Africa—a most interesting discourse and well illustrated by lantern slides. This was the same Professor Poulton who lectured at Ealing, last year, to our Literary Society upon the *Protective Colouring of Insects*. He was great on collecting all sorts of live creatures, and his green butterfly-net was always to be seen wherever prizes were likely to be captured.

On Friday morning I attended the reading of some papers in Section A, and in the afternoon went out to the Observatory to Sir David Gill's garden-party. S—— did not accompany me, having received no invitation, although I found afterwards he might very well have gone. It was interesting to go through the different houses inspecting all the instruments, many of which were new and fine. The large telescope, called the 'Victoria,' had a 24 in. object glass, corrected for photographic work; the visual telescope was of 18 in. aperture, and the guiding one of 8 in. aperture, all were mounted on the same equatorial stand and all had a focal length of 22 ft. 6 in. The dome of the Observatory was 34 ft. in diameter, and the floor rose and fell by hydraulic power. In other houses there were smaller equatorial refractors to be seen. The reversible transit circle was a new instrument with many features of interest; and we also saw some speci-

mens of the Astrographic work which had been done at this observatory.

In the evening, after dark, I went back there with S—— in order to see the stars through the great telescope. The sky was not perfectly clear, but we managed to get some beautiful views, notably of Omega Centauri, the finest star cluster in the whole heavens, and we also looked at Alpha Centauri, our nearest stellar neighbour in the skies and observed how it was a fine double star. It was amazing to think that the light we were looking at left the star to travel to our earth nearly four years ago, while the Boer war was desolating South Africa, and that it had been rushing across the intervening space ever since, at a rate of about eleven millions of miles per minute. Such wonderful distances appal us by their immensity; our solar system is so isolated in space that a train travelling night and day at a speed of fifty miles an hour could not cover the distance between us and Alpha Centauri in less than fifty millions of years. This is our nearest neighbour, a star quite close to us compared with some of the far distant orbs that are sunk in the vast abysses of starlit space.

Mars was looked at, but it was very small and disappointing; Saturn was a better object, but being rather low, the denser atmosphere gave it a fuzzy appearance quite spoiling its outline. Star-gazing was fascinating work. We could not tear ourselves away, and it was half-past eleven before we reached our hotel.

More than half our party had left Cape Town during the day for Durban, the greater number going in the *Saxon,* which sailed at six o'clock, while about a score or so left at half-past ten by rail. They found the journey a long, tedious and roundabout one, there being no direct

connection with Durban. Our steamer, the *Durham Castle*, was to leave the next evening at nine o'clock, giving us a whole day longer in Cape Town.

On Saturday morning, our last day in this charming place, we were up by seven o'clock, and found the weather fine and settled. After an early breakfast I went to the station, where a special train waited to take a party to the De Beers explosive works at Somerset West. The site is located on the north-eastern shore of False Bay, about thirty miles from Cape Town in the Stellenbosch division. We arrived there soon after ten o'clock, and were met by a number of officials wearing red badges, who conducted us to the manager's house, where the ladies welcomed us to coffee and cakes. The sun was very hot, and, as we sat in the garden, many found it necessary to use their umbrellas as sunshades.

These works were situated amid a scene of great natural beauty. In front of us lay the sandy shores of False Bay and the open ocean beyond, while to the right was the Cape of Good Hope; to our left was a large shallow lake called Paarde Vlei, which formed a splendid bathing spot for the white employés. The Trout Club were also making arrangements to stock it with fish. On the tract close to the sea were numbers of great sandhills; a sluit or stream ran through the property draining the land, and this was crossed by several bridges and culverts, and emptied itself into the sea near the mouth of the Lourens river. Far away on the horizon were the mountains of the Stellenbosch and Hottentots Holland ranges, apparently very close, owing to the clearness of the atmosphere, but actually eight miles off to the commencement of their slopes.

The works were founded by Cecil Rhodes in 1899, every-

thing there is of the newest and most approved type in buildings and machinery. The whole is conceived on a scale worthy of the great 'Empire builder,' the total area of land actually covering no less than 3,218 acres, of which about 550 acres lie within the 'danger' area.

After resting a while, we all seated ourselves on the workmen's trains or trollies, which ran on narrow gauge lines all over the place, and in this way we were taken in comfort to see the works. First we visited the power-station, where the splendid but noisy machinery was inspected; then we rode to the sulphur-burning houses and saw a great number of ovens where the sulphur burnt of itself after first lighting. Thus sulphuric acid was produced and run into tanks in the adjoining house, the work being done by a new contact process lately installed.

We went next to see a building more than 600 ft. long, where nitrate was burnt and nitric acid produced. Then our train took us into the 'danger area,' a railed-off portion of the works, at the gate of which, all matches and tobacco were taken from us. Usually no one was allowed within this area except employés in special uniforms of scarlet. All others found trespassing could be at once imprisoned without waiting for the formality of a magistrate's warrant.

We were now taken through the buildings where the dangerous mixing processes were carried on; all the houses that we visited being specially cleared and no work going on in them at the time of our visit, to avoid risk or danger to us. Each house was isolated from every other, and was surrounded by a very thick mound of earth and brick rubble to break the concussion, should an explosion occur. The fluids were brought to these various houses, where the mixing took place, and in this process

they passed from house to house by open conduits, which were so arranged that after each charge had passed, a section of the conduit could be withdrawn, and all connection cut off between the different houses. This isolated each building, and minimized the danger in case any accident should happen.

The buildings varied in distance from one another, from 100 to 500 yards or more. In the mixing houses the tanks were fitted with fume glasses, and should these show any signs of danger by a change in the colour of the fumes produced, the charge would be immediately run out of the tank and precipitated into an enormous reservoir of water under the building. This would at once 'drown' it, and instantly stop all further danger, while the acids could afterwards be recovered from the water. Each mixing house was provided with one of these safety water reservoirs.

So we went on from house to house, each one isolated, and each showing us a different process in the manufacture of dynamite, nitro-glycerine, gun-cotton, and other fearful explosives, until, having seen all that there was to be seen, we went to inspect the stores where the finished articles were kept. These dangerous buildings stood a long way off by themselves; they were surrounded by enormous mounds of earth, looking like fortifications or ramparts, and each one when full held one hundred thousand pounds of explosives ready to be sent out.

Then we passed by train out of the 'danger area' and back to the houses of the staff, where we were entertained to a splendid lunch provided by the De Beers Co., consisting of soup, game and other pies, turkeys, fowls, ducks, game, meat, salads, any number of sweets, lovely peach pies, angels' food (a delightful sort of fruit salad), fruit jellies, cheese, coffee, and cigars, wine and cham-

pagne. The officials with their wives and daughters sat amongst us as hosts and hostesses, and the gathering was a very jovial one. We finished up with toasts, speeches and compliments all round.

Lunch being over, we wandered round the grounds of the officers' quarters, and to the native compound where the negroes lived, and where we saw all the arrangements for their housing. The compound was a large open space, surrounded by a run of galvanized iron sheds; these were divided up into sections, and in each three negroes lived, and slept in bunks very similar to those in use on board ship.

The officials informed me that they employed only 'raw' Kaffirs, and could not do with the educated natives or the half-castes of Cape Colony. They had no difficulty in getting all the labour they needed, indeed they had a second encampment some distance away in another part of the grounds where natives wishing for employment came and stayed until they could be taken on at the works; we saw a large number waiting in this way as we passed the camp. The natives seemed to do most of their cooking in the open air; many were preparing their food while we were there.

The interiors of their sheds were constantly whitewashed to keep them sweet and clean, and they were much superior in comfort to the interiors of the many native kraals we were to see later on during our trip. The natives were employed only for unskilled work, all skilled labour for the factory being that of white men. Before leaving we had tea in the grounds of the manager's house, after which we walked to the rail-head where our special train waited, and with cordial adieux we left amid the cheers of our hosts.

On reaching Cape Town I met S—— near the station; he had elected to take the Hout's Bay Motor Excursion, which was a trip of over forty miles of lovely coast scenery in motor-cars lent by the members of the Automobile Club, who acted as drivers and hosts. He had immensely enjoyed his day, and was now walking quietly to the docks to rejoin the *Durham Castle*, so we went along together, and after doing a little shopping on the way reached the ship in good time for dinner.

When that was over it was quite dark, so we stayed on board where there was plenty going on to keep us interested, and where Mr. L——, of the Observatory, came during the evening to say good-bye. At nine o'clock the steamer left the dock and started for Durban. It was a beautifully calm and starlit evening, but too dark for us to see any shore scenery as we left harbour. I went to bed early, being very tired, and slept well all night; it seemed quite homelike to be back again on the old ship.

ZULU RICKSHA BOYS, DURBAN

CHAPTER V

ARRIVAL AT DURBAN—CIVIC RECEPTION—GARDEN-PARTY

I WOKE early on Sunday morning and found my usual sea-bath very refreshing after missing it for a week. The morning was perfect, the air fresh and crisp, a bright sun shining and our good old vessel was moving along as smoothly as ever. There were a few friends missing from the ship, but their places were filled by many new members who had transferred from the *Saxon* and *Kildonan Castle*. Among these I recognized our President, Professor G. H. Darwin, his wife and son, Sir David Gill, of the Cape Town Observatory, Lord Rosse and several others. We all naturally and easily fell into our old routine of ship life.

We were somewhat beyond Cape Agulhas by noon, having done 197 miles since we left Cape Town. The day was spent quietly like all Sundays were on board ship, and we were in sight of land nearly all the time, although the shore was too far off to be watched with much interest. On Monday we were still off the land, and later in the morning we went close by East London, where we passed the *Saxon* lying at anchor. By the afternoon the wind grew much stronger and we had some rain and more movement of the sea, but not enough to inconvenience us.

Before it grew dark, we passed the blood-stained cliff

over which Chaka, King of the Zulus, was wont to drive his war prisoners and other victims, on to the rocks beneath. It stood out boldly against the line of coast, and we could see the black rocks at its base upon which the tyrant's victims were dashed to pieces, afterwards to be swallowed up by the cruel ocean breaking into foam just below.

At night-time we could see in many directions on the shore the glare of bush fires; this primitive and wasteful way of clearing the ground after each year's crops being still in vogue amongst the Boers and natives nearly all over South Africa. It is a plan that has great disadvantages, but some advantages also. Among the latter may be mentioned the destruction it causes to the many insect pests with which the soil is infested; but of the former we may reckon the loss to the land by robbing it of much of its natural nourishment, and the many disastrous forest fires and destruction of timber, which such a dangerous practice brings about only too frequently.

On Tuesday morning at eight o'clock we anchored outside the harbour of Durban for about an hour, waiting until the *Saxon* hove in sight, and caught us up. This delay gave our amateur photographers abundant opportunity for taking numerous snapshots of the adjacent coast to the west, which was extremely beautiful. When the *Saxon* joined us at nine o'clock, we both entered the harbour, the *Durham Castle* leading, as was only right and proper, considering that it was our ship which had the President of the British Association on board.

Durban harbour was approached by a long narrow channel which opened out into a magnificently wide bay, where there was ample dock-room for the largest steamers. And yet not long before the war, as I was told, the landing

was very primitive, passengers having to be slung on shore in baskets. We were much interested in watching from the ship the many signs of life and progress on all sides. There were several vessels in the harbour loading and unloading, and the quays were busy with bustle and movement.

What appealed to us at once as a novel sight were the crowds of ricksha men waiting for hire. They were natives, and were all dressed in the quaintest and brightest of costumes with short, loose, and gaily-coloured knickers. Their legs and feet were invariably bare, but sometimes the former were painted white in various patterns up to the knees. Their head-dresses were most wonderful to see; hardly two were alike and all equally startling in their savage picturesqueness. Many had great horns of oxen or antelope projecting from their black, woolly hair; others had wonderful devices in feathers or skins, and others again were content with their own black ringlets, fantastically fixed up in many curious styles and plentifully adorned with elaborately-worked bead and bone ornaments.

These men were of magnificent physique, and they seemed a happy, light-hearted lot of fellows. Indeed I was much struck with the difference in their demeanour from the quiet, reserved, and almost sullen type of negro workers of Cape Town. In the latter place, there was among the negroes none of that lightness of heart and jollity of disposition; none of the happy-go-lucky carelessness that I found to be such a marked characteristic of the southern negroes in the United States of America, when I was among them a quarter of a century ago. Probably the great admixture of races at the Cape may account for this; but these negroes of Durban were more like the negroes of the southern states in manners and

disposition. They were mostly Zulus, one of the finest races of the great Bantu family.

The rickshas were two-wheeled rubber-tyred carriages, of very light construction, made to hold one or two persons, and they ran quite noiselessly as they were pulled along by the bare-footed negroes. The men were not harnessed, but held the metal shafts with their hands, as they trotted along with a peculiar swaying step; and occasionally they let off their surplus spirits by giving little skips and jumps which almost threw the riders out backwards, if they were not careful to sit tightly.

We were informed here, as at Cape Town, that our luggage would be passed through the Customs unexamined, and delivered by the Harbour Board free to our hotels, thus saving us a good deal of trouble. We were now leaving the *Durham Castle,* which was to go on to Beira to pick us up again after our tour across South Africa, so T—— S—— and I, who were retaining our same berths all the way back to England, decided to leave part of our luggage in our cabin, so as to travel up country with as small an amount of impedimenta as possible; and this decision saved us much trouble on our journey later on.

We landed as soon as possible, and S——, A—— and I took rickshas for our hotels. We found the motion smooth and pleasant and quite enjoyed our novel ride. On the way, S—— was so amused by the situation that he jumped out and photographed us as we sat in our carriages. When we came to any small ascents we were careful to walk to relieve our boys; we did not know if this was usual, but it seemed the right thing to do when we reflected that men and not animals were drawing us.

Our hotel was reached in about fifteen minutes; it was

not the first hotel in the place, but it was the best available, for earlier applicants had monopolized all the accommodation at the Royal. S—— and I, who had shared the ricksha, gave the boy half-a-crown with which he seemed very well pleased, as well he might be, for we found that we had overpaid him. The fares were fixed on a regular scale which seemed to us to be very cheap; but more liberal payment was necessary whenever a double load was carried as in our case. The day was exceedingly warm and our Zulu boy perspired profusely; this was the only drawback to an otherwise delightfully smooth and agreeable method of getting about.

The hotel was not far from our reception-rooms, where we went next to learn our plans and receive our tickets and papers. Then we crossed to the Town Hall opposite to see the museum, which was in the same building; it was only a small one and did not take us long to look over. Close by were C—— B——'s offices, and later in the morning I called upon him to learn about his doings since his return from England last year. I found him well and in good spirits about his prospects, and he made me promise to go out to Berea and see his wife during the afternoon.

S—— and I had lunch at our hotel, where we found a good many more of our party staying, so that we were able to make up two or three tables together. The waiting was excellent, the waiters being all Indians, dressed in white and looking delightfully cool and in keeping with the semi-tropical surroundings of the place.

There was to be a civic reception by the Mayor and Corporation in the Town Hall early in the afternoon, so we walked on there directly we had finished. These receptions were evidently going to be a feature of our

visit to each South African town. There were hearty addresses of welcome from the Mayor and other speakers, with best wishes that we might enjoy our trip across their continent, to which Professor Darwin cordially responded on our behalf. He repeated his remarks at Cape Town of what his predecessor, Mr. Balfour, had told him of the Imperial importance of the British Association's visit to South Africa. He stated how it was exactly seventy years since the *Beagle*, with his father on board, had sighted the coast of Natal; when Durban was only a small village in the hands of the Zulus. His father was anxious to be put ashore that he might make his way on foot, or on horseback, or as he best could, to Cape Town. But it came on to blow, and the high sea prevented the *Beagle* from sending a boat ashore. He felt that the chances which his father had of getting to Cape Town alive were so slight, that he might say his presence on that platform was literally the result of that puff of wind.

In connection with this reception, I ought also to mention that the *Natal Mercury* and other newspapers contained cordial and appreciative articles about our visit, and the warmth of their remarks gave us all much pleasure when we read them. Their tone can be judged from these concluding words from one article: 'It is an honour we appreciate, a benefit we realize, and a hope that we cherish that the visit will be mutually beneficial.'

When we left the Town Hall after the reception, we found special electric tram-cars waiting to take us to Musgrave Road, Berea, to the garden-party given to us by Sir Benjamin Greenacre, who was the head of a large business firm in Durban, and one of the leading men of the place. It began to rain just as we started and grew worse as we proceeded, until a heavy downpour seemed

to hold out small hope of a successful function for that afternoon. It was pouring down fast when we reached our destination, and as we had a fairly long walk from the gates up to the house we were well wetted before shelter was reached. It was pitiful to see us crowding into the nicely carpeted rooms of the house in our bedraggled condition; but as there was no help for it, we all tried to smile and look pleasant, even if we did not feel so.

The rain continued all the afternoon and quite prevented us from looking properly over the beautiful grounds, which were full of luxuriant tropical vegetation and flowers new and strange to us. We could see from the house great mango trees full of fruit, oranges and limes, and many other sorts quite foreign and unknown. I did try later on to walk round the garden with Miss H—— under our umbrellas, but it was wet work and we soon gave it up.

At the side of the house was a large room, which had been fitted up as a museum and filled with collections of South African birds and butterflies, and heads and horns of a large number of animals of the antelope type, and also some fine stuffed specimens of lions and other indigenous carnivora. I thought how my boys would have revelled among those cases of butterflies, full of thousands of varieties most of them quite new to me. I spent a long time in this museum, greatly interested by everything I saw.

During the afternoon excellent songs were rendered by a quartette, and a band also played in a tent in the grounds. Refreshments were provided on a lavish scale, and, but for the unfortunate weather, the garden-party would have been a great success. As it was all did their

best to make it so, and in spite of the rain and the wind we managed to enjoy ourselves.

At four o'clock I left quietly with A—— after saying our adieux to our hosts, and we made our way to C—— B——'s house which was only two or three roads further on. The rain ceased as we left and the weather remained fine for the rest of the day.

Mrs. B—— and her sister, Miss C——, were at home, and we spent an hour with them, after which we went on to see the Rev. Mr. B—— and his family who lived two doors off. They gave us a warm welcome, but I was sorry to find that his wife was no better in health than when in England. Their daughter had quite grown up and she was interested to hear news about my Margaret. We could not stay later than seven, having to be back in time to dress for the lecture that evening in the Town Hall.

This was given by Professor Freshfield, the subject being *The Highest Himalayas*, with lantern-slide illustrations. The slides were excellent, but the show went wrong owing to the breaking of the carrier just at the start, which was the cause of a good deal of unauthorized amusement to the audience, for the pictures had a way of suddenly disappearing, just as the lecturer was in the middle of explaining their details.

At this lecture the first of a very unnecessary series of distinctions was made in the seating arrangements, the 'official' party being placed on the right of the hall, while the 'unofficials' were relegated to the left side. This caused much annoyance, because there was absolutely nothing to choose between the two sides, both positions being equally good, while it necessitated the parting of many friends from one another; and those of the 'unoffi-

cial party' could not help feeling that they were the goats who must not stay alongside the sheep. The division of our party into these two classes was felt by us to be a purely arbitrary one, made at the instance of goodness knows whom, wrong and invidious in principle, and, if necessary, which we much doubted, should have been tactfully kept out of sight, instead of being accentuated on every possible and unnecessary occasion.

After the lecture we walked quietly back to our hotel. All the tram-cars were free during our visit, dear little circular passes being given to each of us with the compliments of the Durban Corporation. This courtesy was greatly appreciated, although the distances not being great, we did not need to use them much.

CHAPTER VI

MOUNT EDGCOMBE—SUGAR WORKS—ZULU WAR DANCES

WE had been invited to Mount Edgcombe to see over the sugar estates and works, and also to witness native dances by gatherings of Zulus; so next morning we were early at the station, where a special train was waiting to take us to the place. The Durban cadets were at the station to give us a military send off, and were drawn up for our inspection. They were a smart-looking set of youths, carrying themselves with fine military bearing. These cadet corps have been formed all over South Africa to train the youth of the colonies to habits of discipline, and to form gradually a strong force of men for the defence of their country. It is to be hoped that England will follow the advice of Lord Roberts and do likewise.

About four miles from Durban the train crossed the Umgeni river, where we saw the bridge, which had been blown down in the late storm, still in ruins. Owing to the fact that we were there near the end of the dry season, the water was very low in the river, although it was swollen somewhat from the rains of the previous day. Later on we passed through extensive tracts of sugar-canes and saw several refining works.

The journey took us about an hour and a half and was through typical Natalian scenery, hilly and wild; but very beautiful and fresh to us. We saw much vegetation that

was new, for instance aloes in bloom, pine-apple fields just ripening and perfuming the air around with their well-known aroma, nartche trees, bearing a kind of tangerine orange very nice and sweet, wattles, mango trees, the ibiscus with its lovely red blooms, bananas, bamboos, flamboyants, and the strange and unique kaffir-boom with its brilliant scarlet flowers. This blossoms before the leaves come out, just like our almond and peach-trees, and at the season when we saw them the trees were full of the fresh lovely blooms. Climbing over the stoeps of many houses we saw masses of the beautiful orange creeper, called the golden-shower.

As we neared Mount Edgcombe, we could perceive several bands of Zulus wending their way among the hills, in all their savagery of war array, towards our meeting-place. They marched in regiments apparently in formation of fours, singing and shouting as they went, with very weird effect.

The station was decorated with such a profusion of flags, banners and evergreens, that it looked like a bower in a garden, and many officials were waiting to welcome us and take us up to the works. On the way we passed some Zulu women carrying loads on their heads, walking in single file, and looking very picturesque among the thick long grass. Numbers of others stood about watching us with great curiosity, and several companies of men, who had come in from the kraals for the dance, passed us chanting and shouting on their way to the parade-ground.

We went, first of all, over the sugar works and watched the process of crushing the cane and boiling and refining the syrup. All were most interesting, but occasionally we saw things which made us wish never to eat sugar again; as, for instance, when bare-legged negroes or

Indians were found standing up to their knees in the immense vats shovelling the dirty-looking sticky mess.

During the harvest season these works crush 300 tons of cane per day, from which about twenty-six tons of sugar is produced. By the crushing a grey watery fluid was exuded, which then passed through the various processes of boiling, condensing, cleaning, crystallizing and finishing, until it came out in beautiful white, yellow or brown sugar. The lower grades were made into cubes, or golden syrup, while the refuse was collected into huge tanks and afterwards pumped away and distributed on to the land, forming a most excellent manure. The estate extended over 20,000 acres and employed 250 Kaffirs, 1,650 Indian coolies and thirty families of white folks.

A large quantity of sugar is produced in Natal, the amount for 1904 being 30,000 tons, and the annual export is valued at over £340,000. The supply of Kaffir labour being insufficient and not always reliable at the critical times when it is needed, it is largely supplemented by indentured Indian labour.

After going through the works, it was time to make our way to the ground where the Zulu bands were assembled for their dancing. There we found them drawn up in lines in all their barbaric array of skins, ornaments, feathers, and most wonderful variety of head-dresses. Many wore nothing but bead ornaments round the neck and flaps of leather in front and behind the loins. Others had skins round the necks, arms, loins and knees; while a few of the chiefs were dressed in such fantastic costumes as quite to baffle description. As for their head-dresses, some of these were most marvellous creations of skins and feathers, quite beyond my power to depict, and were grotesque in the extreme.

Their dances were almost equally impossible to describe, for their full meaning, even to sightseers, was difficult to grasp. First the whole line, three or four deep, began to stamp and move about, rhythmically keeping time to a monotonous chant which they all intoned together. While this was going on, the chiefs and braves, one after the other, dashed out of the ranks and went through the pretence of sanguinary conflicts with imaginary foes, shouting and capering wildly and stabbing with their sticks with devilish ferocity all the time. These pretended conflicts, which probably re-enacted, with what exaggerations the doers thought proper, some real encounters in the past, were received by their followers with shouts and expressions of approbation, or groans of dissatisfaction; and this sort of thing went on for an hour or more.

Some women of the tribes—it was said that they were witches or favourite wives of the chiefs—pranced meanwhile up and down before the ranks, with a peculiar mincing gait, their bodies bent half double, and they were supposed to be inciting the warriors to further deeds of skill and bravery. Sometimes the whole line, laying their shields before their bodies, would charge down upon us with shrieks and yells as if about to annihilate our entire party; then would halt a score of feet away and draw back with groans of disgust and fear, as though regretting that they dared not touch us. The effect of this upon our inexperienced nerves was very thrilling.

The affair needed to be seen to be properly appreciated. I suppose in actual warfare these dances serve to work up the spirit of the men, exciting them to prodigious deeds of valour and emulation. Indeed the men seemed to be excited enough as it was with even this sham display. We felt it was well that the Government had taken

away their assegais and curtailed the size of their shields, for after dances of this sort they might be tempted to do some mischief.

Then the performance ceased and we drew near to the ranks to take some photographs, after which the women formed up into lines and treated us to a dance on their own account. The married ones wore short skirts, and a peculiar head-dress in the form of a pyramid which seemed to be made of their own hair twisted into shape and fixed with a brick-coloured paste into this peculiar red erection. Their figures were not nearly so graceful or symmetrical as were those of the men; they were shorter and stouter, and their great falling breasts and protuberant abdomens decidedly spoilt them from a European point of view.

The unmarried girls had finer, slenderer and more graceful figures; they had no head-dress, save their own hair, done either in ringlets, or in little twists like tiny spills. Their clothing was conspicuous by its absence; they did not wear skirts like the married women, but contented themselves with loin-straps, or strings of beads around the waist, with small leather or ornamented flaps in front about as large as pocket-books. They were, however, quite modest in their demeanour and movements. I cannot say whether it was owing to their black skins, or their innate modesty, but we all felt that scanty though their clothing was it seemed quite decent and becoming.

Their dance was the usual stamping of feet and clapping of hands to the accompaniment of monotonous chanting, but it was much slower and tamer than that of the men. Occasionally too, some of their more athletic dancers came out of the ranks and executed fearful and fantastic manœuvres by themselves in front of the rest, as the men

had done. The whole performance lasted half-an-hour, after which, having taken some more photographs, we adjourned to a large tent where lunch was set out for us.

There we had by way of contrast a variation in the style of entertainment, for while we were eating, native Christian boys and girls, dressed in European costumes like English school-children, sang hymns and songs to us. They rendered very prettily 'God save the King,' 'Home, sweet Home,' and many other simple and well-known airs, for as a rule the natives have fine voices and sing nicely. Of course this was all done to show us the contrast between the heathen and the christianized Zulus, for our host, the Hon. Marshall Campbell, was an ardent believer in and supporter of missions. Afterwards he made a kindly speech welcoming us, and Professor Darwin replied suitably.

A native missionary then addressed us and in a forcible and humorous speech appealed to us for funds to help on his work in that locality, in the way of starting workshops for the manufacture of the simple agricultural tools of the natives, where they could do their own work, and so be gradually taught the dignity of labour. This, he argued, should take precedence over all other sorts of teaching in the regeneration of the Kaffirs. He drew a comparison between the simple civilized performance to which we had just listened and the brutal savage display enacted outside, and claimed that these results came from training the children early in life. He alluded to the prejudice there was against the christianized natives and the complaints frequently made by employers against this class of servant; then he passed the whole thing by with a long and humorous anecdote; but I did not notice that he replied to any of the complaints in an effective way.

However, the point was that he emphasized the necessity of teaching the negroes to work, and so, in aid of this portion of his programme, our party subscribed £75 before leaving the tent.

After lunch we went to the Zulu encampment again, where we saw the men cutting up a whole ox for their meal; chopping and hacking off great pieces with long-handled axes—a horrid sight—until the place looked like a shambles. They roasted the pieces upon sticks over fires on the ground, round which squatted groups of men, eating the meat often half raw. We wandered among them taking photographs, and bargaining for their rings and trinkets, many of which they were quite ready to sell to us. They called a threepenny piece a 'ticky,' and one of these coins would often purchase a copper bracelet such as most of them wore; sixpence or a shilling would buy an anklet or a necklace, while for five shillings a hide shield might be obtained.

They gave us afterwards more dances, and then, as they were evidently getting very excited, we were advised to leave them and make our way towards our train. On the way I passed an orange garden where the fruit hung in great profusion, and negroes climbed the trees, and showered down upon me lovely oranges and grape fruit, until I could carry no more. I selected a fine 6 ft. length of sugar-cane to bring away as a specimen and then joined the train, where our kind hosts gave us a most hearty send-off.

Passing again through the lovely scenery of Natal, we reached Durban soon after four o'clock. Leaving our treasures at the hotel, a few of us went by tram-car to the Botanical Gardens, where we wandered about, looking at the wonderful wealth of strange vegetation until it was

A BEVY OF DUSKY BEAUTIES, MOUNT EDGCOMBE

too dark to see more. I had felt most energetic at Mount Edgcombe, but in Durban it was quite fatiguing to walk about. I should imagine it to be rather a relaxing place, at any rate to those coming down from the higher lands of the interior. We were much struck to see, everywhere round Durban, the wonderful redness of the soil. This was particularly striking in the Botanical Gardens, where huge pits excavated in the earth show this rich colour to continue down to a great depth. We saw one pit, at least 20 ft. deep, and the earth was as red at the bottom as on the surface.

After dinner we went to the lecture delivered in the Town Hall by Professor Herdman on *Marine Zoology*. It was interesting, but I was very tired and sleepy; so I went to my hotel as soon as I could, and to bed early.

This brought our delightful but all too short stay at Durban to a close, for the first thing next morning we were found assembled at the station, saying 'good-bye' to our hosts, the Mayor and Corporation, who shook hands and wished us a pleasant trip up-country. Here we found waiting for us our special trains, A, B, C and D, for which tickets had been allotted in Cape Town.

The carriages were all first-class, roomy and very comfortable; there were four sleeping-berths in our carriage, but, as I have already mentioned, the fourth was to be reserved for our hand baggage and our clothes, when we undressed. We found this extra room very useful during our journey, and were more fortunate than some of our companions in this respect, for many of the other carriages had their full complement of four passengers. The trains were all on the corridor plan, so that we could visit one another and make our duty and pleasure calls

whenever we liked; we found this intermingling and companionship very agreeable as time went on.

The carriages had open platforms at each end, where several could sit or stand, and these platforms became our gathering places when we wished to meet, as the weather grew hotter. Each train had two dining-saloons, which, when meals were not about, were turned into reading and writing-rooms for our use. And so, comfortably stowed away, and in the best possible spirits, we started on our long journey through South Africa. After the D train there followed on another, bringing all our luggage, stores and provisions for the way.

The trains left Durban at intervals of half-an-hour, in the order of their letters, we being in the third or C train. We passed through some lovely country, seeing numbers of natives at work in the fields. The scenery was very hilly and in many places the land was covered with millions of loose stones or small boulders, which gave it a barren and good-for-nothing appearance. I understood, however, that the soil was really extremely prolific when cleared and cultivated. But all through the day, especially on the slopes of the mountains, I think I never saw so many stones before in my life. As our journey continued, I found this to be a feature over the greater part of South Africa.

There were no tunnels and very few embankments, the gradients were exceptionally steep, many of them being as much as one in thirty. The sharp curves were a striking feature on the railway, so that the trains wandered round and round the same point as they rose to higher and higher levels; and once we could see both the B train in front and the D train behind us in sight together, although half-an-hour in time separated each train. It was strange to see us thus looking at one another from

different levels on the same range of mountains. In all, we rose 3,054 ft. above sea-level, until we reached within thirteen miles of Pietermaritzburg, when we dropped 1,000 ft. to that town. I learned that only ten per cent. of the line was on level ground.

I must say a few words about the scenery *en route*, for some of it was very striking and beautiful. The train, soon after leaving Berea suburb, began to climb an ascent known as 'Jacob's Ladder,' towards an eminence called 'Sea View,' where a most magnificent glimpse was obtained of the country with its bush-clad hills and the open sea beyond. Then we passed Pinetown, where there was a noted monastery of the Trappist monks, one of the largest missionary institutions in South Africa, devoted to training the natives to work.

Shortly after this the train rose higher and higher, giving still wider views of the densely-foliaged valleys and plains, while the sea was still in sight, looking calm and peaceful a great way off. Then passing Palmiet a few beautiful little waterfalls were seen, and later some magnificent gorges or kloofs appeared between the mountains, while dense forests covered these great rifts in the earth. Then the beautiful and awe-inspiring 'Valley of a Thousand Hills' broke upon our astonished view. There the scenery baffled description, it was wild and romantic in the extreme, and worth a journey to Natal to see.

Next we passed Tchanga, about half-way to Pietermaritzburg, where at refreshment rooms excellent meals could be obtained; we were, however, provided for in this way, and so made only a short stay there. An hour and a half later, we reached our destination and entered the large and fine town of Pietermaritzburg, the capital of Natal. There we were met at the station by members

of the reception committee, who quickly placed us in the many waiting carriages, and we were at once driven to our hotels. I was located at the 'Horse-shoe' on the main street, and about a mile from the station. It was a large place, quite in the centre of the town, and tram-cars to all parts ran by the door.

I missed my friends S—— and T—— S——, who were located at the Sanatorium, where they were waited upon and attended to by nuns, but I was with my friend Mr. H—— from Accrington.

The garden-party given by Sir H. E. McCullum, G.C.M.G., the Governor of Natal, was fixed for four o'clock at the Government House, so, having more than an hour to spare, H—— and I went on to the Public Gardens, and on the way saw a good deal of the town, which we much admired. The situation was high and open, while the air was very fresh, invigorating and bracing, and in fact we felt the cold considerably after our change from the lower level of Durban.

At four o'clock we went to Government House, where a great many residents were met to welcome us, and there we made a large crowd. The refreshments were on a liberal scale, but the crushing made it difficult at times to get served. The situation of the garden was high and exposed, and while there we felt the cold more than ever. Afterwards a party of us went out by tram to the Botanical Gardens, where we arrived just as it was beginning to get dusk; we had time only to walk quickly round the grounds before the darkness came on, which it did very rapidly in this latitude.

In the evening we went to the Town Hall, in which building also our reception-room was situated. The place was erected in 1898, and the hall was said to hold

2,000 people, and it was packed on this occasion to its utmost capacity by a very interested and influential audience, to listen to a lecture given by Colonel Bruce, F.R.S., upon the *Sleeping Sickness*. He made it very clear how closely this strange disease in man is allied to the equally strange tetse-fly disease in horses and kindred animals. He traced them both to similar parasites known as *trypanosoma*, screw-like bodies due to the bites of the tetse fly, and showed how the disease had come into Uganda from the Congo territory, and how it spread along the north-eastern shores of Lake Victoria Nyanza, hanging chiefly about the swampy regions where this troublesome fly abounds. He explained what a terrible disease it was, and how it had already swept off hundreds of thousands of victims.

The lecture was illustrated by many slides, and was of a deeply interesting character. Now that so much has been found out, it is to be hoped that something may be done towards the extermination of the disease. It has been already noticed that by draining certain swampy districts the fly has been banished and the activity of the dreadful scourge lessened in those parts.

After the lecture there was a conversazione and supper in some of the up-stair rooms, to which, however, I did not go, as the hour was late and I felt greatly in need of bed. So I returned to the hotel, and read some newspapers before retiring. They were all full of paragraphs of our arrival, and their leading articles warmly welcomed us to Pietermaritzburg, as the papers in Cape Town and Durban had previously done. This warmth of hospitality was very gratifying, and it added much to the pleasure of our trip.

We left Pietermaritzburg next morning in two special

trains for the native location at Henley, where we were to witness some more dances by a large gathering of tribes, and also to see the unique ceremony of a wedding performed with all the strange and primitive rites of the Zulu people. On our journey we passed through open hilly scenery, something like that of the previous day, the train steaming its way along the slopes of the mountains, winding in and out up to higher levels, as we went right into the very heart of the country where the location was situated.

Many natives were seen along the route of the railway, and large parties of them were walking, driving, or riding to the place of meeting. The occasion was evidently considered by them to be a very special one, as the dances and rites were to be performed in the presence of Sir H. E. McCullum, the Governor, who, by right of his office, was the supreme chief of all the tribes.

ZULU WEDDING—THE BRIDE AND HER ATTENDANTS

The bride is clad in a leopard's skin

CHAPTER VII

ZULU WEDDING AT HENLEY

IMAGINE a little wayside station, standing alone in a valley, surrounded by the great hills of Natal. This was Henley, where the train presently deposited us. We seemed to be in a natural amphitheatre, but from the crests of the hills a fine view of the great Table Mountain by Pietermaritzburg could be seen. These flat-topped mountains were quite features of South Africa and we saw a great many during our journey across the continent.

A short walk brought us to the meeting-place where a large number of natives had already gathered, and by the time our second train had unloaded its passengers, the tribes were ready to begin the day's proceedings. Seated upon forms, or lying at ease upon the ground, the members of the British Association in a great half circle were waiting in interested expectancy, with the Governor in the centre and Professor Darwin on his right, while on his left sat Mrs. Darwin and Sir David Gill.

The ceremony began by the chief Umveli and his tribe marching on to the ground, and forming in line several deep in front of us. First came their salute to the Governor—a peculiarly wild greeting when they all bent low to the earth, and then straightened themselves quickly,

uttering at the same time a strange, hissing noise, as though they all were drawing in or letting out their breath forcibly through their teeth. This changed to a shout as they stood upright again and lifted their sticks high in the air. In a real war dance assegais would be used, but on this occasion they had to content themselves with sticks instead.

The salute was repeated several times before they settled down to their dance—a wild, barbaric affair, but very impressive—to the accompaniment of monotonous chanting and clapping of hands and beating of tomtoms. It was very similar to that we had seen at Mount Edgcombe; but on account of the greater importance of the gathering, there were a larger number of chiefs and headmen present, with a more wonderful display of savage costumes. It would be impossible to attempt to describe these with any hope of making myself intelligible, for they were varied, wild and picturesque in the extreme, hardly two being alike. Fortunately our photographers were busy with their cameras, and we were able to bring away some pictures of the chiefs who danced before us. Most of the rank and file wore very little clothing, having only sundry styles of loin-bands to which were attached squares of leather or skins hanging loose in front and behind.

After the dance was over, Umveli came forward with his headmen to be photographed; then he and his tribe marched off, and taking up their places on our right remained as spectators of the evolutions of rival tribes which were to follow on.

The chief Laduma and his people came next and saluted as Umveli and his tribe had done, after which they performed a dance worthy to rank in interest with that we

LADUMA AND HIS INDUNAS

had just witnessed. This chief and his headmen were also photographed in their turn, but did not seem to relish the proceeding, and were evidently uneasy while it was being done. It certainly was an ordeal to have some hundreds of cameras levelled all at once upon them; especially if they had even the faintest idea of the caricatures of their noble selves which would afterwards be produced by their photographers. The snapshotting being over, Laduma and his tribe withdrew to our right and rear to watch the further proceedings.

Now began the chief event of the day, which was the marriage of the hereditary Chief Mhlola, of the Inade tribe, a large and powerful gathering of approximately 7,429 people living in 1,748 huts. This chief's party came forward, saluting as the others had done, and performed a dance, after which Mhlola sat on the ground, nearly nude, and awaited the approach of the bride's party. These came in their turn, and, forming into a long line, took up their positions some distance off, facing the bridegroom and his men. There were a large number of women with the bride's party, and these stood in ranks by themselves on the left of the men.

Another dance, similar to those we had already seen, was now gone through by the long line of Zulus representing the bridegroom, and after this was over, they squatted on the ground, while the orator of the tribe came forth from the ranks. This man marched up and down between the two parties, declaiming in Zulu, with a magnificent flow of language and fine emphasis and expression, the great deeds of his tribe and his chief. He certainly was a splendid orator, and although we could not understand a word he said, we were delighted with his eloquence, and it was a pleasure to hear him thus holding forth, as he

marched so proudly up and down the long lines of listeners.

The virtues of the chief and tribe must have been manifold, for he continued speaking for nearly half-an-hour, after which he retired while the bride's people took up their share of the performance. These treated us to a dance and their orator declaimed their virtues in eloquent language, reciting the deeds of his tribe just as the other had done. Both men were fine speakers, but the first was far and away the better orator.

Then it came to the turn of the women to perform a dance before the bridegroom, who all this time had remained seated on the ground. So far the bride had not shown herself; but as the women's dance ended, she came forward, accompanied by three bridesmaids, and the four approached Mhlola, crouching under the shelter of open umbrellas as they advanced. The bride raised the bridegroom from the ground, dressed him in his skins and feathers, and seated him on a chair. Then after performing a short dance before him the four fell back again into the ranks of their comrades, and the whole party of girls retired to their original position.

While this was going on two young girls advanced toward us, carrying jars of Kaffir beer upon their heads. These they deposited on the ground in front of the Governor, and sitting down, each took a good long drink from her jar before handing any to us. They evidently enjoyed the drink; but it was also a mark of hospitality to taste first and was intended to show the guests that the brew was pure and unpoisoned and no treachery was meditated. After this, it was poured out into glasses and handed to Professor Darwin and the rest of us to sample. The beer was of a dirty milk colour, rather thick, and

of a sour taste, and it required some getting used to before it could be properly appreciated. I contented myself with a very modest draught of it.

The agent of the bridegroom, usually a brother or relative, whose business it was to arrange the amount of the lobolo, or marriage consideration, now stepped forward and showed his acquiescence in the proceedings by a little dance of his own. This finished, the bride presented him with an umbrella and gave the same to each of his three companions.

All the morning the lobolo had been standing in full view of the whole assembly. This varies according to the rank of the bride. In this case it was ten oxen, which the bridegroom had to pay to her father, as her purchase price, while he in his turn presented the customary gifts to the bridegroom. The bride also brought a number of presents and laid them at her husband's feet; a curious assortment consisting of a kitchen chair, a small German lamp, a few tin pots and a mysterious bundle or two. I believe they were for his mother and other women of his household.

So far this had all been ceremonial, but now the legal part of the marriage had to be performed. The question was put to the bride by the Commissioner for Native Affairs whether she was marrying Mhlola of her own free will, to which she replied in a clear, loud voice which we could all hear, 'Yes, I love him, ten oxen have been given for me,' as though the amount of her price was something to be proud of. This was of course spoken in Zulu, which we did not understand, but it was translated to us by the interpreter. The bridegroom also had to signify his consent, all this being to carry out the laws of the land that no one, black or white, should be married, except by their own consent.

Now took place a very exciting incident, for the bride suddenly rushed away as though trying to escape, and several young girls of the bridegroom's party rushed after and brought her back. This must be a survival from the old custom of marriage by capture, and its present use was for the purpose of ascertaining whether the bridegroom's people really desired the girl to become one of them. If they failed to pursue and bring her back, she was evidently not wanted and in such a case would have to go home unmarried. However, as it turned out, the lady was promptly caught before she had gone very far, and then she was arrayed in a fine leopard's skin, the mark of the rank to which she had attained as mother of her husband's tribe, and a gorgeous arrangement of cock's feathers was put on her head. One of our ladies went forward and threw round her neck a gold chain, a wedding-present with which she was immensely delighted.

The real marriage dances then began by both parties in full dress—for in the meantime they had arrayed themselves in all their finest profusion of skins and feathers. While these were being performed—and they seemed likely to be interminable—we beat a hasty trek to the refreshment tents for luncheon as it was nearly two o'clock. Owing to the somewhat limited accommodation for such a number of visitors, there was a good deal of scrambling before our creature comforts were satisfied, especially in the matter of drink, for the day had been sunny and hot and our throats were dry and parched, in spite of the Kaffir beer with which the two dusky damsels had supplied us.

However, we were all served in time, and afterwards made our way back to the ground where the performances were still going on and seemed to bid fair to

ZULU GIRLS CARRYING KAFFIR BEER

last for the rest of the day and probably far into the night. The Kaffir thoroughly appreciates an affair of this kind, and whenever he can get a chance he will make the most of it.

I have described the incidents of this wedding as well as I can from my memory of the very bewildering proceedings which we saw, many of which were difficult for us to follow intelligently; and I have been helped in my description by referring to the printed leaflets which were distributed to us for our guidance. We had also the assistance of the interpreter, who explained many things that puzzled us. I think the order of events was such as I have described them; but if I have misplaced any I have done so by trusting to the paper rather than to my memory.

The trains were now whistling for our return, so we made our way back to the station, and soon afterwards left for Pietermaritzburg. As we went past the ground where the dancing was still going on, the Zulus gave us a hearty send-off in their wild and noisy way.

In Pietermaritzburg the Legislative Chamber had been placed at our service as a writing-room, and there I spent the rest of the day to finish my home letters.

At dinner in the hotel we were joined by some members of our party who had not been to Henley, but who had taken one or other of the excursions also arranged for us by the town. One of these was to the Government Experimental Farm at Cedera, and another to the Government Laboratory at Allerton, while a third was to the Town Bush Valley Nurseries. All had been exceedingly interesting and instructive, and I wished I could have spared the time to take them also. However, four trips in one day would have been impossible, and I was very

well satisfied with the Henley excursion and its unique experiences.

The evening's lecture in the Town Hall was given by Mr. H. D. Ferrar, a member of our Association, who was also an old Natalian boy; which fact the chairman proudly announced to the gathering. He had been a member of the Antarctic exploration party in H.M.S. *Discovery*, and gave us a most interesting lecture, with lantern-slide illustrations, upon the experiences of that remarkable voyage. At the close of the lecture there was a conversazione and supper as on the preceding night.

ZULU WEDDING—THE BRIDE'S PROCESSION

CHAPTER VIII

COLENSO, LADYSMITH AND THE BATTLEFIELDS

On Saturday, August 26, we left Pietermaritzburg on our journey to Colenso and the battlefields. Again we had the same hearty send-off as at Durban, the Mayor and chief officials being at the station to wish us good speed.

The trains immediately began to climb some steep gradients through very interesting country. We passed the site of the Boer refugee camp on our right, and Fort Napier on our left, and then the military cemetery with its numbers of small white crosses came into view. We were to see many more of these last resting-places of our brave soldiers before the day was over. Afterwards we crossed the river Umgeni and saw the village of Howick, beautifully situated among the hills. There were the celebrated falls of the Umgeni, where the river dashes over a precipice 360 feet deep, but our trains did not bring us within sight of them; while some ten miles further up the river were other falls known as the 'Kar Kloof,' which were said to equal the Howick ones, and which formed a series of beautiful cascades with an aggregate descent of 350 ft. All this part of the country is well worth a visit.

Next we passed Nottingham Road, the farthest southern point to which the raiding Boers penetrated, during the war. From there away to our left could be seen the mighty

Drakensberg mountains, with their two famous castles 'Giant' and 'Champagne' clearly discernible.

Later on we crossed the Mooi river, which may be considered the beginning of the country where the great scenes of the war were enacted. A short distance further we saw the great level plains about Frere, where General Buller had his head-quarters, and about Chieveley, where the English camp was formed. There abundant traces of our army's occupation could be detected in the well-worn veldt still quite bare of grass or vegetation.

Close by we came to another military cemetery, also with its familiar little white crosses which marked the soldiers' graves. At one corner of this burial-place was a larger and finer cross in white marble, beneath which lay the body of Lieutenant the Hon. F. H. S. Roberts, V.C., the only son of Lord Roberts, who fell mortally wounded at Colenso, in a gallant attempt to save the guns. The train steamed very slowly past this cemetery, in order that we might obtain a good view of it.

From this point onwards, for mile after mile on either side of the railway, we could see the well-worn track along which our soldiers had marched towards the formidable obstacles which held them up so long before Ladysmith.

We passed through the cutting where our armoured train had been derailed, and the defenders, including Winston Churchill—then a war correspondent—captured. It did not look like a spot where there should have been any likelihood of disaster, for only a very low kopje, close to the left of the railway, could give any shelter to a concealed enemy. But we learned as we proceeded how the Boers were everywhere past masters in the art of surprises, and could bring off big captures in the most unexpected places.

More cemeteries with their graves and small crosses, or with often one great grave in which many bodies had been buried together, were passed further on. They were in beautiful condition, for all were tenderly looked after and cared for by the ' Guild of Loyal Women.'

At three o'clock we reached Colenso, where our trains drew up on sidings on the actual battlefield. There we were to remain until the next morning, so that we might have plenty of time to see all over the historic site, where was fought perhaps the most fateful conflict of the whole war. Colenso itself could scarcely be called even a village, only a few scattered houses, mostly of galvanized iron, dotted the veldt, and no business seemed to be going on. But for the accommodation that our trains afforded, we should have been obliged to sleep on the open ground, for other shelter there was none.

An old soldier volunteered to act as guide, and we were taken over the battlefield, and the spot where Colonel Long's guns were lost was pointed out. We saw the donga close by, from the shelter of which our brave gunners were shot down by the hidden Boers. We wondered how any troops in the world could take up such an exposed position without first scouting fifty yards to their right among the only trees on the field, to see if the coast were clear. Such neglect was not to the credit of those in charge of the guns, and it seemed incredible to us.

The veldt was still bare of grass where the guns had stood and the brave gunners fell, and close by was the obelisk which marked the spot where Lieutenant Roberts dropped mortally wounded.

Millions of great ants were running about all over the ground, and they crawled on our boots as we stood or

walked. During the day we had seen thousands of the curious mounds which these creatures raise on the ground, in most cases about three feet high; but later on in Rhodesia we were to find them very much larger stilll.

From the battlefield we could see Hlangwane Hill, about two miles away, and five or six of us started off to walk to it and clamber up its steep and toilsome ascent to the top. It was a difficult climb and we shuddered to think of our poor soldiers having to storm up such places, with their arms and accoutrements, in the face of the murderous rifle-fire from the Boer trenches at the summit, and we felt that the men must indeed have been, as General Buller described them, 'splendid.' We came across one very fine trench near the top where the Boers, in perfect safety themselves, could pick off our men as they approached. On the summit we saw the stone walls they had raised as protections round their camp.

On Hlangwane Hill I got up a small aloe by its roots, and was successful in bringing it home to England uninjured, and it is now flourishing in my conservatory, a memento of this historic hill.

As we returned, we paid a visit to a Kaffir kraal at the foot, and saw in one hut a woman grinding Indian corn, or mealies as it was called, which formed the staple food of the natives. The method of grinding was quite primitive and was performed by rolling one stone backward and forward over another which was larger and slightly hollowed, the grain being placed between them; with the result that a fairly clean and fine flour was produced.

The natives were cheerful and friendly and welcomed us cordially; they did not rise to greet us, but uttered some words while remaining squatting on the ground. They spoke of course in their own language, but it was

KAFFIR HUTS AT THE FOOT OF HLANGWANE HILL

quite easy to know what they meant, especially when, lifting the right hand above the head, they thanked us volubly for the gift of small silver coins. One old woman seeing how amused we were at this, repeated the thanks time after time, laughing heartily as she did so. The huts were small and dark, wood fires burnt in the centre, the smoke finding its way out somehow at the top.

We had literally to crawl in, for the entrances were not more than three feet high, and when once inside it took a few minutes to get accustomed to the gloom before the occupants could be seen. Three visitors at a time inconveniently crowded these little dwellings, and there was not much room for us to stand upright. Usually a small enclosed stockade surrounded each hut, or at any rate prevented direct approach to the entrance. At one of these places I procured a gourd large enough to make a water bottle, while S—— obtained a small one of the size commonly used by the natives for holding snuff, of which they are very fond. They work these snuff-boxes over with beads in various patterns, and wear them hanging on chains round their necks.

It was quite dark by the time we rejoined our C train, and there found to our great delight that the letters from England, addressed to Ladysmith, had been sent on to us at Colenso, so that we received them a day earlier than the expected time. This was good news, and was one of the many little acts of courtesy shown to us everywhere by the authorities.

After dinner I took a starlight walk over the battlefield and thought, as I strolled about, of all the terrible deeds that had been done there only five years ago. Now everything looked so tranquil, hardly a breath of air was stirring,

the vault of heaven blazed with its myriad silent orbs; there was such an air of utter peacefulness over all this 'out of the world' spot, that I found it at first difficult to realize the ghastly horrors of war that had been enacted there.

I grew sentimental and poetical, with the following results, which though scarcely applicable to this particular battle, nevertheless I here set down—

THE DEMON OF WAR

Gay are the banners that float on the air;
The people are shouting; the loud trumpets blare;
For the news has come from the distant shore
That fortune has favoured our arms in the war.
The streets are ablaze with bonfire and glare:
Glad are the cheers that ring on the air.
And aloud in his glee laughed the Demon of War,
"Who so honoured and fêted as I am, ha! ha!"

"On the wings of the wind I have sped from the scene,
Where the red blood of murder has stained the fair green;
Where hearts that at morning beat careless and high,
Now silenced for ever, all passionless lie,
I have sped with the news of the victory won,
To witness the mirth of the joy-maddened town,
The bonfires, and banners, and glare, ha! ha!
Who so worshipped and served as the Demon of War?"

He flew through the land 'mid the revels of night,
But all who beheld him shrank back with affright;
From home after home on the cold midnight air
He heard, as he entered, the cry of despair,
He entered so many, so few he went past,
On the morrow the country in mourning was cast.
And the wailings for loved ones, that followed him far,
Were but laughter and mirth for the Demon of War.

We retired to bed about ten, and the night being calm and warm, all the windows of our carriage were left open for air and ventilation. But very suddenly, soon after

midnight, a gale of wind sprang up—for everything seemed to happen suddenly and unexpectedly in this strange land of extremes—and I was nearly blown out of my berth; for I was on the top one, and on the side that received the full force of the blast. I tried to shut some of the windows, but found that impossible, for the beds had been drawn out across them and they could not be got at without waking up my two companions in the lower berths. This effectually upset my night's rest, and when morning came, instead of rising early as I had intended, I felt heavy and dozed on until seven o'clock.

The wind subsided before dawn, as suddenly as it rose, and the morning was sunny and warm when I stepped out of the carriage. S—— had already gone to explore Fort Wylie, as arranged overnight; but it was too late to follow him, so I walked as far as the Tugela wagon bridge, which had been broken down during the war by the Boers and still remained unrepaired. What little water there was in the river was so low that I could easily have waded across the stream with little more than wet boots; but it was scarcely necessary even to risk this, for on the other side, bare and uninteresting, stretched a long expanse of flat open veldt. Close to the bridge a small white mosque of picturesque appearance was just approaching completion, built for the Indians who seemed to be the chief residents in the neighbourhood.

We breakfasted at half-past eight, and soon after were ready to start off for Ladysmith. The trains had been ordered to steam slowly, so that we might have plenty of time to inspect the historic scenes of so much terrible fighting. We soon crossed over the Tugela railway bridge and saw to our right the steep frowning Hlangwane Hill, which we had ascended the previous day, then Monte

Christo came into view, while on the left we saw Grobelaars and Hart's Hill. Near by were the twin mountains, called from their peculiar appearance Sheba's Breasts, and well they deserved their name.

As we ascended Hart's Hill, we could see in front of us to the right the scene of that last terrible conflict, Pieter's Hill, the capture of which relieved Ladysmith. It was marked by a monument on its summit.

We then came to Umbulwana Station, close to the hill of that name, where the Boers had their famous Long Tom, which did so much mischief. There, also, Lombard's Kop and Gun Hill came into view, while close by was the 'Intombi' cemetery with its many small white crosses marking the soldiers' graves. In the distance, right in front, down in the valley, Ladysmith could be seen, and soon after crossing the Klip river we arrived in the town.

We were now at the scene of one of the greatest sieges of modern history, in a great plain surrounded by the historic hills of Lombard's Kop, Gun Hill, Cæsar's Camp, Wagon Hill, Observation Hill and the other eminences forming the British lines of defence.

We were at once driven to Wagon Hill and Cæsar's Camp, the scenes of the terrific fighting of January 6, 1900. The Manchester Regiment were holding the hill, when they were surprised by the Boers under General Villiers and in one of their small sangars all the defenders were killed to a man. Their cemeteries dotted the fields and a stone marked the scene of the disaster.

The English troops recaptured the position owing to a splendid charge made by the Devon Regiment, who drove the Boers precipitously over the steep brow of the hill. Villiers was killed, and the slaughter on both sides was great; but it was a necessary sacrifice of life, for if the

place had been permanently held by the Boers, it so entirely dominated Ladysmith that the town must have fallen. We picked up on the battlefield several bullets and a piece of a burst shell fired from the Boer gun 'Long Tom' on Umbulwana.

In the distance, but quite clearly visible, stood, solitary and bare, the famous hill known as Spion Kop. With our glasses we could see the monuments on its summit, and, viewing it as we did from Wagon Hill, we were able to form a correct idea of its dominating position to Ladysmith. There can be no doubt that had our generals decided to hold it on that fatal morning when they seized it, the siege must at once have been raised, and, indeed, the Boers had already begun to vacate their positions. Our guides told us of the consternation and despair that prevailed in Ladysmith, when its gallant defenders, who had watched the struggle with ever-growing hopes, saw our troops begin their calamitous retreat. If ever they lost heart during all the terrible time, they lost it on that day.

Driving back to Ladysmith, we passed the cairn which marked the spot where Lieutenant-Colonel Dick-Conyngham fell mortally wounded. It was well under the shelter of the hill on the town side and seemed to be a place that should have been quite beyond danger. We saw many underground bomb-proof shelters, which had been left undisturbed since the siege. In these places the non-combatants, and especially the women and children, took refuge, whenever the shell firing grew too hot for safety. The roofs of these shelters were covered over with great stones, millions of which lay about all over the ground, for Ladysmith was one of the stoniest places I had seen so far in this very stony country.

Round the chancel of All Saints church were a large number of panels, all full of names of fallen heroes of the terrible fighting; we passed there on our way back to the town and spent some time in its gratefully cool shade, looking at these mementos of the war.

The driver of our Cape cart was a young Natalian farmer living near Ladysmith, and with him, on a bicycle, we had had the company and guidance of a friend of his. They had both lived in the town during the siege, and were able from personal knowledge to give us much useful information, and to point out everything of interest that was to be seen in the place. They certainly had done their best to make our morning a pleasant and instructive one, so we asked them both to lunch with us at the Royal Hotel, and after the meal we all walked across to the Town Hall opposite, to see the damage done to the building during the siege.

A shell had struck the clock-tower and knocked a great part of it away, and it had been left in the same condition ever since, only slight repairs having been made to render what remained of it safe. I believe that it is intended to do nothing further to it, but to let it remain as it is, an object of great interest to visitors, and a memento of Ladysmith's darkest hours. We could see the protruding end of a shell, deeply buried in the front wall of the Town Hall, which had struck and penetrated where we saw it, but had failed to explode. Many such shells, still buried in the walls, were also to be seen in other parts of the town.

In front of this building stood two howitzers, obsolete guns which had been found in Cape Colony and rushed up to Ladysmith, for what they were worth, just before the siege began. Old as they were however, they did good

service in the defence of the place; they were effective at short ranges, and it is believed that they were actually the cause of General Joubert's death. They had been set up on a slope of Wagon Hill, on November 28, and when the Boer 6 in. gun began to fire they replied. General Joubert was there to watch the effect of his gun, and the return fire from these howitzers came as a surprise to him, as it was not known to the Boers that they were there. Their third shot fell right among the enemy, so startling them that Joubert's horse reared over on him and he received the internal injuries from which he never recovered. He was a brave and high-minded foe, and the English felt his loss almost as much as the Boers did.

The great defect of these howitzers was that they used black powder, and their positions, owing to the smoke, could always be located, so they had to be continually moved about, for they always became objects of the enemy's unwelcome attentions.

In the Town Hall, by the forethought of the Corporation, were displayed on tables a large quantity of spent and burst ammunition, pieces of shells, shrapnel, etc., collected from the town and surrounding battlefields, and we were invited to take what we liked away with us. I selected a number of spent bullets and cartridge cases, parts of two fifteen-pounder shells, some pieces of burst shells and bits of shrapnel, which was as much as I cared to carry, and deposited them in our Cape cart outside. Some shells, which I might have taken, were of enormous sizes, but their weight put their conveyance to England quite out of the question.

Opposite to the Town Hall and close to the hotel, was a house, the back wall of which had been struck by a

shell. A man was sleeping in the room at the time, and the shell coming through the wall passed just over his bed—they said in the house that it dragged the bed-clothes off—and it struck and exploded at the further end of the room. The man sprang from the bed and rushed out unhurt—one of the most marvellous escapes of the war. We saw the marks just above the bed, where the wall had been repaired, and also a photograph of the room taken after the explosion, when the whole place was a complete mass of wreckage. Near by was another room in which was displayed a very fine collection of shells and ammunition used by the British and Boers during the siege.

It was still early in the afternoon, so taking our Cape cart again we were driven all over the town and about the suburbs. Ladysmith is modern in style, with fine broad streets laid out like an American city at right-angles; but I should not think that it was at all over-burdened with business. Certainly it was Sunday when we were there, but there was an air of quiet, not to say sleepiness over everything, that seemed natural to the place.

We drove first to the house in Murchison Street, where G. W. Steevens, the *Daily Mail* Correspondent, died. Close by was the Post Office, which the defenders strengthened during the siege to serve as a last stand, in the event of the town being taken by the Boers. We saw the house on Poort Road, where General White lived and had his head-quarters, until it having been struck and damaged by a shell he was obliged to move away. A specially interesting sight was the cemetery, unhappily only too full of the graves of fallen soldiers. There we saw hundreds of the small white crosses, similar to those we

had seen so frequently before. As a rule these crosses bore the names of the soldiers who were buried beneath, but where from some cause this had not been known, the words read simply, 'In memory of a brave soldier.'

Scattered among the graves of the English were some of those of their foes. On most of the latter—the Boers having been unknown—the crosses bore the inscriptions, 'In memory of a brave burgher,' or 'Here lies a brave burgher.'

Thus they rest there together, the fallen of both races, equally honoured in their death; and this union in their last long sleep may in time help to do its part to heal the wounds the war has caused, and to weld both peoples into one strong nation, claiming South Africa for its home and zealous for its prosperity and honour. In this cemetery we also saw the grave where G. W. Steevens was buried.

The hills around Ladysmith in this direction were covered with stone ramparts, erected by the defenders as a second line of defence, in case they should lose their hold upon the summits.

We had now been all over this very interesting and historic place, and, as the time was getting late, we drove to the station where our shells and other treasures were deposited in our carriages; and after settling up for our cart hire—a very expensive proceeding—we left at six o'clock on our way to Johannesburg. It was quite dark soon after we left, so that we had no opportunity of viewing the interesting spots around Dundee and Talana Hill, nor could we see the fateful Majuba Hill, nor Laing's Nek, for it was about midnight when we passed the frontier.

CHAPTER IX

ARRIVAL AT JOHANNESBURG—THE MINES—THE CHINESE QUESTION

WAKING early next morning we found ourselves near Heidelberg in the Transvaal. The day was bright and sunny, but the air exceedingly cold and crisp, for we had risen during the night to a high altitude. The country on all sides was flat and uninteresting, not much cultivated, and, except in the town itself, very sparsely populated. Now and then we came across a farm, but usually the train went for miles and miles over the bare veldt with never a house or tree to break the monotony.

After breakfast we could see that we were nearing the vicinity of Johannesburg, for on the distant horizon rose up many tall chimneys, and mine-head erections, great unsightly structures, blots upon the primitive landscape. We could detect also many long flat-topped hills, strangely uniform and white, which we soon recognized as 'dumping heaps' from the mines. There were immense numbers of these heaps and they each covered a great many acres of ground. Not the slightest trace of grass or vegetation of any sort grew on them, owing, probably, to the presence of the cyanide used in the extraction of the gold, and which probably still impregnated the stuff. It seemed a pity that they should be so bare, for any growth on them would have helped to stop one of the

most prolific sources of the dust with which Johannesburg is plagued. Green grass might convert them into objects of beauty, instead of being as they were now terrible eyesores on the landscape. I believe attempts have been made, by the admixture of portland cement, to manufacture the stuff into paving blocks, and artificial stone for buildings. If this could be successful there would be enough material in these heaps to pave every town in the Transvaal.

We had now reached the famous Witwatersrand, the largest and richest gold-field in the world, which extends in an unbroken line for a distance of over forty miles. It was evident that we were approaching a large and populous town, for the suburbs extended a long distance out, and we ran through two or three stations before stopping. When at last the train came to a standstill, we were at the Park Station, Johannesburg, which had been gaily decorated in our honour.

The platform was a scene of great excitement; crowds were waiting to receive us, for it had been arranged that during our stay in Johannesburg every one of our large party was to be entertained privately in the houses of the residents. Our hosts were eagerly making inquiries to have their guests pointed out to them, and we were equally ignorant as to their identity; but the admirable arrangements made by the reception committee greatly facilitated the process of identification. It was a happy idea that we should be entertained in this way, for it would enable us to see more of the home life of the place than we could possibly do in hotels, and in my own case the plan turned out especially fortunate, as I shall relate later on. In consequence of this arrangement, the description of my stay in Johannesburg must be to a great extent an account of my own private doings there.

My host was a Mr. R—— who soon found me out, and almost immediately he had me and my luggage deposited in his motor-car, and we were on the road to the suburb where he resided. It was evident that folks in Johannesburg did not believe in wasting time. His home was at Doornfontein, a distance somewhat over three miles, and we covered it at a speed which occasionally made me nervous about our safety; and as this was my first experience of motor-car riding my nervousness was excusable. Mr. R—— proved himself a very expert driver and I soon felt perfectly secure with him, and much enjoyed the many rides we had together.

At his house I received a warm welcome from his wife, a Cape Dutch lady, and I at once saw that I was in for some entirely new experiences during my stay with them. She was exceedingly pleasant and agreeable, thoroughly well informed, and likely to prove an instructive companion during my visit. I was anxious to learn all I could as to how recent events were regarded by her people, and felt that she would be quite willing to talk freely to me, so I looked forward to an interesting time with them.

We did not stay long at the house, but after light refreshments motored back to the town to our reception-rooms at the Technical Institute. There R—— left me for an hour or two, while I obtained my tickets for lectures, trips to mines and other places, and also papers relating to our Bloemfontein visit. He returned later on and took me off with him to the Rand Club, where we had lunch in company with a large number of our party and their various hosts.

The great Club was filled to overflowing, and all the wealth and influence of the golden city was represented

there. I was much struck by the magnificence of the building, the size of the rooms, the style of furniture, all rivalling our best London clubs. The dining-room where we lunched seated 350 guests at least, and the whole building cost no less than £120,000 to build. The Club had a membership of about 1,500, the entrance fee was fifty-five guineas, and the yearly subscription twelve guineas.

When lunch was over, we motored out some miles to the Simmer and Jack Mine, where I was shown all the surface works, which were on a truly colossal scale. We saw the quartz brought up from the mine and passed by stages through the powerful stamps, which crushed it until it was reduced to the condition of fine sand; afterwards it was carried through screens and over the copper amalgamating plates, where the free gold was retained. The rest of the stuff passed away with the slimes, for further treatment by cyanide.

This process has been the making of the industry on the Rand, for there is not much free gold in the quartz; and, as the great bulk of it can only be reached by cyanide, it is safe to say that but for this process few of the mines could possibly be made to pay the expenses of working them. As it was, the work had to be done on the largest scale, and an enormous quantity of the ore treated before costs could be cleared. I was especially struck by the magnitude of the scale of operations at this particular mine. The power-room, the machinery, the stamps, the tanks and slime vats—everything was immense. From what I saw there and elsewhere, I could readily believe the reports of the engineers, that the finest labour-saving appliances that skilled ingenuity could devise were to be found on the Witwatersrand.

We afterwards saw the gold as it was recovered from

the slimes, a yellow spongy mass which had to be refined in the furnaces. We saw one lot drawn from the fire, and poured, a white glowing fluid, into a mould about twice the size of a brick. This was quickly cooled by plunging into water and then we were at liberty to handle it. We were even told that we might have it if we could carry it away with us. Putting forth all my strength I could only just lift it about an inch from the table. That golden brick was worth £3,600 and represented practically one day's output. Lying on the manager's desk and close to his hand during these operations were two revolvers; he said that he always kept them handy on such occasions.

Only one negro was in the house helping the skilled white workers; but none of the wily Celestials who were employed elsewhere all over the mine were allowed to handle the gold, or, indeed, to enter the refining shed at all.

We had seen these Chinese coolies at work all the afternoon; a queer-looking lot of fellows of various types. Being recruited from widely separated provinces of China they naturally differed greatly in their appearance; those from Manchuria and the north having by far the finest physique. They interested us greatly, so we went on to the compound, in order to inspect the conditions there and to learn all we could about the 'slavery' question. The mine employed over 4,000 coolies and was one of the best we could see for this purpose.

The compound in which they lived was a large quadrangle enclosing an open square. It had been erected especially for the Chinese, under the supervision of the Government, and was on the most approved sanitary principles. It cost the company nearly £60,000 to put up; a great initial expense and a rather unnecessary one, for we were told there was already on the spot a good

Kaffir compound, which had to be pulled down, because they were not allowed to use it for the newcomers. Facts like this should convince people at home that the interests of the Chinese have been really looked after by the Transvaal authorities, and that they are not hand-in-glove with the mine owners to let them have things all their own way.

At the gates of the compound we found Chinese police, and nearly all the officers inside were of the same nationality. The men gathered in crowds around the entrance, as we went in, and looked at us with considerable curiosity, many smiling with the well-known 'bland and childlike' look immortalized by Bret Harte; many had that emotionless expression so common to Orientals, while others were intelligently interested in our proceedings and followed us about all the time. A few were quiet and reserved, almost sullen, and in all they were certainly a motley crowd; some tall strong-limbed fellows and many quite little chaps. They were none of them confined to the compound, but could wander about all over the mine.

Inside we were allowed to inspect everything, nothing was concealed; all the arrangements for their housing, sleeping, feeding and recreation, their baths, lavatories, sitting and reading-rooms, were open to us. We went into their hospital and sanatorium, built and fitted in the very latest approved style, such as would not disgrace London. Their bedrooms were airy and light, their dining-halls large and lofty; their kitchens clean and fitted up with the best labour-saving utensils, for most of the cooking was done by steam from the power-houses. They had their own cooks, and the food was plentiful and good. We saw it uncooked, we saw it in process of cooking, we saw and tasted it when it was finished; it was as nice as the men could desire. Tea, being their chief drink,

was continually on tap; they were allowed as much as they liked to take, and we saw them filling their jugs from great tanks full of it. They were all moving about seemingly contented and happy; we did not see the slightest sign of anything approaching to slavery, and we felt sure that that word to describe their condition was not only incorrect, but deserved a much stronger definition.

Writing in view of the facts disclosed to me at this mine and elsewhere, I do not think that the outcry in England about their treatment is at all warranted. Our Japanese member, Iwasaki, who might be supposed to know something of the condition of these labourers when at home, told me himself, after he had been over another of the compounds, that he considered the men were very well treated and far better off than they could possibly be in their own country.

The Chinese were not prohibited from leaving the mines; they could easily obtain permits for this purpose, provided there was nothing against their conduct; but these obliged them to be back again by sunset. In special cases they could obtain leave for forty-eight hours, but in the ordinary way it was not considered desirable that they should be out at night-time. We saw some of them on the roads between the mines and Johannesburg, and I was told that they spent a good deal of money in the town, to the great improvement of the trade of the place.

Arrangements have been made, if the men sign a wish to that effect, for a portion of their wages to be paid to any special relations in China. Their earnings began at 1s. per day and their keep; but if within six months the average rate of pay did not reach 50s. for each thirty

working days, the minimum had to be increased to 1*s.* 6*d.* per day. As a matter of fact this scarcely ever happened, for the men were allowed to work piece work and earned considerably higher wages as soon as ever they became expert. There was also a system of bonuses by which they managed to earn still more.

Their normal condition of health was very good. Beriberi was at first their chief disease, but this was being eradicated; even including this and all sorts of accidents, their death rate for the twelve months before our visit was only 20 per 1,000; or if accidents were eliminated only just over 15 per 1,000, a rate lower than obtains in most English towns.

We saw notices printed in Chinese, put up in various parts of the works, which we were given to understand were to acquaint them with the rules and regulations, and to give them instructions how to act in certain emergencies. The men who committed offences could not be punished without the sanction of a visiting magistrate, and I believe the rule was for each compound to be visited daily, so that such cases might be investigated at once. Whether this plan worked satisfactorily and secured absolute justice to the coolies I am not in a position to say. Many in Johannesburg approved of the plan, considering that the men could be tried better on the spot and among their comrades, who could give evidence; but others spoke against it, and at any rate it has since been stopped, and the culprits are now tried in the ordinary courts.

It seems to me that all these things are a matter of trial and experiment; it was probably impossible to foresee every contingency when the regulations were first drawn up, and only experience could show the best way to

manage an entirely new form of labour which had to be carried on under special and peculiar circumstances.

If the laws that have been passed are found to fail in their object, or need strengthening—if any loopholes have been left for abuses to creep in, if the servile conditions about which so much has been made are really recognized to exist, surely the wiser policy would be to alter the laws, and not to condemn the system altogether. No one in the Transvaal, and least of all the mining community, whose prosperity depends upon this labour, would object to strengthening the ordinance so as to prevent abuses in future. But to raise a wild hysterical cry for the abolition of this form of service altogether, is neither wise policy nor common-sense.

What did we do in England, when years ago one of our own poets had to write of the conditions of female labour here?—

'Oh to be a slave along with the barbarous Turk,
Where woman has never a soul to save, if this is Christian work!'

We set about altering the laws which regulated this kind of work; but no one went agitating all over the country for the abolition of female labour altogether.

The introduction of the Chinese was a necessity. One does not need to be long in the Transvaal to find that out, for the supply of native labour is notoriously insufficient. It may seem strange to us that, in a country where there are millions of black people, none of whom are fitted for other than the simplest unskilled work, this kind of labour should be so expensive and so scanty. The cause lies in the comparative absence of any incentive to work.

Life for them is so easy, and their wants are so few, that they fail to understand why they should work. For ages

they have existed without it, or with the merest apology for it, until the habit has become deeply ingrained in their nature. No matter what the occupation they take up, they never will keep to it for more than a few months at a time. They are never happy unless they can return frequently to their kraals, and there idle about, living in lordly opulence upon the money they earn so easily. Offering them higher wages would not make them industrious, but would only intensify the evil, by rendering them more independent, and so lazier than ever. As it is, competition for their services on the farms, in the mines, and for domestic service has so raised their price that I found they were receiving in private houses for most inefficient service from £3 to £4 per month with everything found for them.

Nor can white people do the unskilled labour of the mines. It has been found by repeated experiments that they will not work alongside the Kaffirs; if they attempt it they at once lose caste and quickly throw up the work. Even if they would do it, they could not live in Johannesburg under 10s. per day, and there is scarcely a mine in the Transvaal that could pay this rate of wages and keep working a year. It must not be forgotten that these mines produce gold, and the industry cannot be carried on long by paying out 25s. or 30s. for every sovereign's worth of gold recovered.

But in addition to all this, it is a very serious question indeed, in a country where the blacks outnumber the whites by more than five to one, whether it would be a prudent policy to encourage Europeans to work shoulder to shoulder with the natives. We rule them only by prestige; and there seems no surer way to lose this than to adopt such a course.

As a solution of the difficulty, the Chinese were brought over under strictly defined and limited conditions, and the experiment has been amply proved to be a great success as far as it has gone. It has enabled many mines to be opened up and worked. It has given employment to thousands of skilled white men, one of these being required to every eight Chinese. The trade of the Transvaal has been stimulated and revived in every direction, and we in England have already begun to feel the benefit of the increased production of gold. I do not know what the future may bring forth, but I am quite confident that the withdrawal of this form of labour, should it be attempted, would be most disastrous for the Transvaal, and for South Africa generally.

CHAPTER X

GARDEN-PARTY AT LORD SELBORNE'S—DOWN A DEEP-LEVEL MINE—CONCLUSION OF PROFESSOR DARWIN'S ADDRESS

WHEN we had seen everything, we motored back to our house, R—— racing all the way with the occupants of another motor-car, and coming home first. It appeared that at present there were no motor laws controlling speed; but I was told that they were shortly to come into effect.

The roads in many parts of Johannesburg were not of the best, and especially in the suburbs they were often merely sandy tracks across the open veldt, so the cars jumped and bumped along these tracks in very wild fashion, and to race at any speed required careful driving.

When we arrived home, I was introduced to a Mrs. L——, a Cape Dutch lady like my hostess, and also married to an Englishman, who had come to stay with the R——s during my visit; and I found her an agreeable addition to the household. She was well-informed, and from her and from Mrs. R—— I learned a great deal about the way the Boers regard the events that led up to the war—more of which anon.

After dinner we four went to St. Mary's Hall, where the Mayor and Corporation were giving us a reception. The High Commissioner (Lord Selborne) and Lady Selborne were also present. The crush was great, and the large hall and equally spacious supper-room were crowded

by our party and the Johannesburg residents who had come to meet us. I was introduced to a number of the friends of my hostess, and spent a pleasant evening with them. We left about eleven o'clock, and soon reached home, where I slept well to make up for the disturbed nights I had had on the train.

The next morning I spent some hours at the Technical Institute writing letters, and attending meetings in two different sections; mathematics (astronomy), and anthropology, these being the most interesting to me.

R—— called for me later and we returned to his house to lunch, and to fetch the two ladies, for we were all to go to Lord Selborne's residence, 'Sunnyside,' to a garden-party. A little rain came on, and threatened to spoil this function, as it had done those at Cape Town and Durban; but later on the weather cleared, although the afternoon remained dull and sunless. We were received by Lord and Lady Selborne and by Sir Arthur and Lady Lawley, and shook hands, after which we wandered about the grounds and had tea. The gardens were not large, and there being a great number present, the paths were crowded in places, for we all avoided the wet grass.

Wishful for me to learn all I could, my hostess and Mrs. L—— introduced me to several prominent guests amongst the company; and among others, to General van der Merwe, whose name was much heard of during the war, to Mr. George Goch (the Mayor of Johannesburg), to Mr. Johnston (the Mayor of Pretoria), to one of President Steyn's staff officers, and to several more. I had interesting conversations with these gentlemen, and much enjoyed the opportunity of learning all I could about the stirring events before and during the war. From one of the prominent Boer officials under the old *régime*, I

inquired for President Steyn, and was told that his health was now restored, that he was back in South Africa, and in the coming days we should hear much about him, for he was going to play a very important part in the affairs of the country. Asked whether the late president had taken the oath of allegiance, my informant replied, 'No! and never intends to!'

I asked him his opinion as to the cause of the war, and he replied as follows—

'The time had come when it was necessary to learn who were to be masters in South Africa, the Boers or the English—whether our ideals or yours were to prevail. We thought we were the stronger and should conquer, or in case of our failure that the determination of your people might slacken as it had done before, or that some foreign nation might interfere. We did not think you were so strong, or that you would fight to a finish. We now recognize that both races have to live together in the country, we accept the fact and trust that we shall live amicably in future. We hope to get back by constitutional means what we have lost by war.'

From which I gathered that the hope of becoming the dominant race in South Africa is by no means extinct in the Boer breast.

After the garden-party we proceeded to Dr. K——'s house; he had been tried for high treason during the war, and sentenced to death. His sentence had been changed to imprisonment for life, and, as is usual in such cases when events quiet down, he had been lately released.

He lived in a nice house not far from 'Sunnyside,' and as I went into the drawing-room where his wife and sister were sitting, I was greeted by the latter with this welcome: 'You have come right into the midst of rebels, we are as

great rebels as you will find in the Transvaal; if you don't mind us, come along in.' I certainly did not mind them, and went in very readily, and spent a pleasant hour in their company. I found them most sociable: well-read and very well-informed: and was entertained with a number of amusing anecdotes, chiefly of the war. As we were talking, Dr. K—— himself came in: he was an agreeable and pleasant man, and I was sorry I could not spend a longer time with him.

We returned home to dinner, and afterwards spent a quiet evening round the fireside (the night being very cold) discussing South African affairs in a friendly and agreeable way, and from the talk I learned a good deal about how the problems of the country were regarded by both of the white races, my friends naturally viewing these questions from the standpoints of their different nationalities. One thing they were all very emphatic about; that it was a great mistake for England to have surrendered the Transvaal after Majuba. However much the Boers had disapproved of the annexation, and the way it had been carried out by Sir Theophilus Shepstone, it was a fatal mistake for us to retreat as we had done; it lowered our prestige among the more ignorant Boers, and sowed the seeds of the troubles that came after.

The following morning I went with a party to the Robinson Deep-level Mine. The shafts were not more than a mile from the Technical Institute and we were driven there in brakes. We dressed in miner's clothes, overalls of a coarse blue material which entirely covered us from neck to ankle. On my head I wore a miner's hat, a most disreputable article, and what I looked like I cannot say, fit for a fifth of November bonfire, I should think; but thus clad we were impervious to any dirt or wet.

We descended the mine in cages which dropped straight down to the 1,800 ft. level without stopping. As the steel rope grew longer and longer the cage swayed up and down, and gave us something of the sensation of being on board ship. My ears soon stopped up, with a sense of fulness in them which was relieved only by continual swallowing, and this persisted until I became used to the extra air pressure. We were all provided with candles, which the draught in many cases blew out.

At the bottom we stepped out of our wet cage on to the floor of a large electrically-lighted chamber, where several natives were moving about and where rumblings and noises from the distant workings were heard; there we waited for the rest of our party to come down, and then picked our way along the tunnels which were frequently very wet and slippery.

We had to walk warily, for down the centre of the passages, rails were laid, along which trucks full of broken ore were continually passing, and these did not allow us much room to go by. These trucks were moved along by an endless chain, until they reached a bend round which they shot very rapidly. There a clever tilting arrangement sent them over sideways, so that all the contents were pitched out into a great hole in the ground and so tumbled down to a lower level. Then the trucks slipped back to their upright position again and passed on to be caught presently by the endless chain and carried once more into the tunnels to be refilled. From the moment that they were attached to the chain until they returned back again to the miners to be refilled they were not touched by human hands.

Climbing down some distance we came to where men were drilling holes for dynamite blasting; the diamond

drills used in these operations being driven by electricity. There it was quite easy for our inexperienced eyes to detect which was the barren rock and which the true reef. The latter was a pebbly-looking conglomerate, sparkling with yellow grains which, however, were not gold, but only iron pyrites. The gold itself was invisible, contained around the marble-like pebbles of the quartz, and could be removed in its entirety only by the cyanide process, such as we had seen in operation at the Simmer and Jack Mine. We were allowed to pick off from the wall sample pieces to bring away with us.

Then we scrambled down to lower levels, where we saw the quartz from the level above come tumbling through shoots into the trucks which stood ready to receive it. Every labour-saving appliance that could possibly be used was employed in these mines.

After all had been shown to us, we were taken up to the surface, feeling very hot and wet, for the heat of the mine and our thick clothing combined, had made the place seem like an oven. It was necessary to cool off in a shed by a lighted stove before venturing out into the open air; the medical officer in attendance at the mine telling us that the neglect of this precaution by the miners was a fruitful source of lung disease and pneumonia.

We were thankful to get out of our hot dresses, wash ourselves and feel respectable once more; after which we had light refreshments and a chat with the manager and some of the staff, before being driven back to the reception-rooms at the Technical Institute.

At the Robinson Deep-level Mine, as at the Simmer and Jack, the machinery and plant was all of the most powerful description. Every contrivance for the saving of labour was utilized, and enormous quantities of quartz

were treated daily; all the unskilled work, however, being done by Kaffirs, and not Chinese.

R—— called for me in his motor at one, and we went to the New Club where we lunched, and met as before a large party of our members and friends. This club was newer than the 'Rand,' hence its name; it had nearly as large a membership, and in every way it was quite equal to its rival across the road.

We spent the afternoon motoring round the suburbs of Johannesburg to get some idea of the extent of the place. I could not but wonder at its marvellous growth, when I remembered that twenty years ago all was open veldt where the city now stood. I believe the first blocks were laid out in 1886, when sites could be bought for a few pounds. Some of the streets now rivalled those of London in the size of their splendid buildings, the business premises of the firm of Eckstein, at the corner of Commissioner and Simmonds Streets, being a remarkably fine structure.

We went out as far as the golf links and the Observatory, and from the former obtained a magnificent view for miles over the surrounding country. Then we came back to the town by a different way, picking up Mrs. R—— and Mrs. L—— *en route*, and so to the New Club where we all had tea.

Professor Darwin gave the second part of his presidential address the same evening in St. Mary's Hall. The meeting was a very crowded one, and again a vexatious division was made between the seating of 'official' and 'unofficial' members, the latter having to stay back behind a barrier, and watch their friends go forward to the front seats. This very much annoyed R——, who, as a member of the reception committee, had heard nothing

about any such arrangements, and was naturally indignant with the officials, who thereupon offered to allow us to pass the barrier. This he would not do, preferring to remain behind among the rest of our party; but vowing that he would make a row about it after we had left. The fault, however, was not with our Johannesburg friends, but with our own officials, who had given the instructions. Besides it was all so unnecessary, for the seats behind were quite good and every one could see and hear perfectly; it was only the invidious distinction that was in such bad taste, giving annoyance to everybody, and causing, as we heard, much comment in the clubs the next day.

The address was upon *Evolution in the Starry Heavens*, as a complement to the part we had heard in Cape Town, which had treated of the same subject in connection with the infinitely small atoms and electrons of inorganic nature. Professor Darwin began by alluding to Laplace's nebular hypothesis, and showed how, when supplemented by his own theory of tidal friction, it was able to explain the formation of worlds and satellites. He told us about the birth of the moon upon this hypothesis, and why it always turned the same face to the earth. He calculated that the date of its separation from our world could not be less than fifty millions of years ago, and was probably hundreds of millions of years earlier. Physicists forming estimates in other ways had, until lately, demanded a far lower scale of time, for their calculations led them to put the total history of the life of our solar system within some twenty millions of years. They had, however, moderated their views, since the discovery of radium and its properties, which might add enormously to their calculation of the life of the sun. The lecturer then

explained radium, and gave some instances of its power, stating how one ounce had energy enough to raise 10,000 tons a mile above the earth's surface, while twenty-two ounces would have been sufficient to bring the Union Castle steamship *Saxon* from Southampton to Cape Town, viz. 12,000 tons, a distance of 6,000 miles. Therefore, as the sun is known to contain radio-active minerals, the duration of its life is uncertain and the scale of geological time remains uncertain also.

He spoke about the origin of double stars, showing how their motions were explained by the tidal theory, and said in conclusion that while we could trace the solar system back to the primitive nebula with some degree of certainty, and while doubtless other stars and systems had also similar origins, still such primitive nebulæ themselves stood in need of explanation, and this science was unable to furnish. He finished by uttering a prophecy—

'Man is but a microscopic being living on a puny planet circling round a star of inferior rank. Does it not then seem as futile to imagine that he can discover the origin and tendency of the universe as to expect a house-fly to instruct us as to the theory of the systems? And yet so long as he shall last he will pursue his search and will no doubt discover many wonderful things that are still hidden. We may be, indeed, amazed at all that man has been able to find out, but the immeasurable magnitude of the undiscovered will throughout all time remain to humble his pride. Our children's children will be gazing and marvelling at the starry heavens, but the riddle will never be read.'

Lord Selborne, who presided, proposed a vote of thanks to Professor Darwin for his magnificent address, which was carried by acclamation, and then after some formal business the meeting broke up.

Our motor-car was away in the country, so we went home by cab. The night was cold and dark, but the skies were gloriously beautiful with the stars of which the

President had been speaking so eloquently. Although taken as a whole the southern skies were not as brilliant as our northern heavens, they had a beauty of their own which appealed to me from its very newness.

I was never tired of looking at them, although my inexperience prevented me from recognizing many of the constellations. The Southern Cross could, however, be easily picked out; it was more like a diamond than a cross, and though its appearance of itself was not striking, its close proximity to its pointers Alpha and Beta Centauri, which were both brilliant stars, made that portion of the heavens very beautiful.

THE GRAVE OF THE LATE PRESIDENT KRUGER IN PRETORIA CEMETERY

CHAPTER XI

PRETORIA—VEREENIGING—BLOEMFONTEIN

NEXT morning we were due at the Park Station by eight o'clock for our trip to Pretoria; so R—— drove me there in his trap, as the motor-car had not yet been brought back. However we met it on the way and quickly exchanged into it, picking up a short distance further on our friend the Rev. C. W. S——, whom we saw looking out for a conveyance to the station, and who but for our motor would have missed the train.

For some distance out of Johannesburg the train took us over a very flat stretch of veldt; often the only objects in sight were the block-houses built by Lord Kitchener during the later stages of the war. Some were being used by farmers as stores and for other purposes, some remained untouched and desolate, while others were falling to ruins. As we neared Pretoria, which was about two hours' journey from Johannesburg, the scenery improved, and we came across some pretty little peeps of wooded and undulating country.

When we reached our destination, we were met by members of the reception committee, who put us into carriages and tram-cars, and we were driven to the public square in the centre of the town. I could not help noticing on the way the absence of Dutch names and writing over the business houses, on the advertisements

and sign boards, and at the corners of the streets: nearly everything was in English. I had expected to find the place essentially Boer; as it was for so many years the capital of the Republic.

The square to which we were driven was a fine open place, with handsome buildings on three sides at least; the finest being the new block used as the Law Courts, while opposite was the almost equally fine Raadzaal. On the third side was the Post Office, a much smaller, older and less pretentious building, and on the fourth, a fine new row of shops and offices; while a broad street started on this side also and ran right up to the Public Gardens, and to the suburbs. In the centre of the square in President Kruger's time stood the famous Dopper church; but it was considered such an eyesore and so spoilt what was otherwise an imposing site that it was pulled down after the English occupation, and its absence has left the square a fine open space worthy of the centre of Pretoria.

The chamber of the second Volksraad, where the Boers debated their ultimatum to England, which began the war, was placed at our disposal as a reading and writing-room during our visit, and while we were waiting for the second train to come in we visited this and the Law Courts. Then carriages were provided and we were driven out into the suburbs and outskirts of Pretoria, from whence we obtained magnificent views of the country round. Mr. Van Reesma, the Town Clerk, was in our carriage and acted as guide, and he suggested that we should first see the Botanical Gardens, where, although it was yet winter, we found a fine display of flowers, and some magnificent beds of pansies. The suburbs extended a long way out, and a great many new houses were springing up in all directions; most of them built in very

attractive styles, and with such lovely stoeps or verandahs after the good old Dutch fashion, that I quite fell in love with them.

The drive lasted two hours and then we were deposited at the Pretoria Club, where we refreshed and washed. As our numbers were large we were divided into three separate parties for lunch, and S—— and I joined the one at the Grand Hotel, over which Mr. Johnson, the Mayor, presided. On his right hand sat the Governor (Sir Arthur Lawley) and Sir David Gill, and on his left Professor Darwin. I saw the late Hydrographer to the Admiralty (Sir William Wharton) come in afterwards, and he also sat on the Mayor's left. The lunch was excellent, and our long morning had sharpened our appetites so that we did justice to it. Opposite to us was sitting an army officer, who gave us some useful hints for the trek which a few of us were taking across the veldt from Bloemfontein to Kimberley *via* Cronje's laager, the following week.

We had, of course, the usual toasts of the King, the High Commissioner and the Governor, proposed by the Mayor; the British Association proposed by Sir Arthur Lawley in a capital speech, in which he much regretted that our stay in the Transvaal, and especially in Pretoria, was so short, considering how much there was of interest for us to see. This was responded to as usual by Professor Darwin, who was beginning to find it difficult to say something new on these numerous occasions. However, he made a happy speech which pleased everybody. The Mayor then drew attention to the fact that the day was the Queen of Holland's birthday, and was being kept by the Boers in the Colony as a *fête* day, and he thought he would be expressing the wishes of the British Associa-

tion if he asked them to drink with him Queen Wilhelmina's health; it would be a graceful compliment to our Boer fellow-subjects. This toast was accordingly drunk, after which we separated and were again put into carriages and driven to those parts of the town which we had not as yet seen.

Our first visit was to the well-known house of the late President Kruger, with its famous lion sentinels on the stoep. There the astute ruler of the Boers used to sit, drink his coffee and receive his visitors. How often on this verandah has been heard his strong, gruff, peasant voice, now stilled for ever. The house itself was tenantless save for a caretaker, and looked dirty, neglected, and uncared for, with many broken panes of glass in the grimy windows. It was an old-fashioned place, not very large, and unattractive in appearance. I walked all round the garden at the rear, and talked with a man who was digging and planting there.

We drove further on to the cemetery where we found the graves of Kruger and his wife, and also that of his son —or was it grandson?—who was killed in the war; these were neatly and well kept up. In the same cemetery was the tomb of Prince Christian Victor of Schleswig-Holstein, a victim to disease during the war, and the grounds were full of the familiar small white crosses, which everywhere marked the graves of soldiers who fell in the strife. Some little distance from the cemetery we could just see the racecourse, where the English prisoners had been confined during the early stages of the war.

From the cemetery we drove to the Public Gardens, where, in a private enclosure, His Excellency Sir Arthur Lawley and Lady Lawley were giving a garden-party to

the Association. We were received in the museum adjoining, and then, after inspecting the fine collection of stuffed animals, especially the very large white rhinoceros, we walked through the gardens to where the live animals were confined. In one cage was the magnificent lioness which Cecil Rhodes had sent to President Kruger when it was a cub, and which he had so indignantly returned. It was said that this indignation was only assumed, because by some indiscretion the Boer papers had talked about the gift and resented it. However, the cub was dispatched back to Rhodes; but after our occupation of Pretoria, it was again sent there and has lived since in the Zoological Gardens, where we saw it: and a most magnificent beast it was.

We had tea in the enclosure, where we spent an hour or so, and then strolled back to the square, where I went to the Volksraad chamber in order to write a few postcards home. Meeting Captain W—— at the post office I walked back to the station with him, and we left for Johannesburg soon afterwards.

There was a lecture the same evening in St. Mary's Hall by Mr. Hammond, upon *Steel as an Igneous Rock,* to which I went, and met R—— already there. It was a capital discourse and much appreciated by the audience, although to me its rather unfamiliar technicalities made it not so easy to follow as intelligently as I could have wished. The audience was fairly numerous and would doubtless have been larger, but for the counter attractions of a ball and supper at the Wanderer's Club, given by the Caledonian Society, for which I also had an invitation but had elected not to go.

The next day was the last of our visit to Johannesburg, and in the morning, with much regret, I said good-bye to

my kind hostess, who had made my stay at her house a most enjoyable one.

When I reached the Technical Institute I found a letter from Miss B—— awaiting me, which had come the previous morning while I was in Pretoria, inviting me to lunch with Mrs. Jeppe and herself at Friedenheim on that day. I was very sorry to have missed it, for it would have been a great pleasure to have met her again after so many years. Friedenheim was too far from the reception rooms for me to get there during the morning, for I had still several commissions to do in town. So ringing her up on the telephone we had a few minutes' talk together, and I explained how it had happened that I missed getting her letter. I told her that I was leaving before one o'clock, and she promised to try to get to the Park Station to see me there before I left; but she was unable to do so; therefore we missed the pleasure of meeting.

After finishing my letters and other business at the Technical Institute, I went on to R——'s office to say good-bye to him, and to the New Club to leave some letters which had come for T—— S——, who had not returned from Pretoria; and after finishing what other business I had in the town, I was taken back by R—— in his motor to the Park Station, where a special train waited to convey a large party to Vereeniging, at the invitation of Messrs. Lewis and Marks. Mr. Sam Marks was there to accompany us and gave us a most hearty welcome.

We lunched directly after starting, and by two o'clock we reached Vereeniging, where the party broke up into three sections. The one to which I attached myself drove first to the brick and tile works connected with the Estate Company, where we saw the processes of tile and drain-pipe manufacture, a large order for the latter articles

received from the Corporation of Johannesburg being then in course of execution. The works were also turning out excellent blue bricks, for which they could get any price up to £10 per 1,000; a splendid return I thought, for in England we have to content ourselves with about 45*s*. at the most. Of course all skilled labour being so excessively dear in the Transvaal was the cause of the high prices that had to be charged.

After inspecting the interior of the works, we saw outside the process of salting the kilns in order to give a proper glaze to the drain-pipes; and this was repeated twice, we learned, during the course of the burning. In the clay-hole a gang of negro convicts was working, guarded by their warders; they were supplied by the Government at the rate of 1*s*. per day for each man, and made excellent labourers. The manager told me that he had about twenty of them in all, and wished that he could get twice as many more; which I could well understand, when I remembered the usual price of labour in the country and the difficulty there was to procure it at all in sufficient quantities.

We took our carts again—springless, jolting things they were, in which it was necessary to sit tight in order to keep from being thrown out—and drove for about two miles to Viljeon's Drift on the Vaal River. The closing of this drift and others by President Kruger in 1894 nearly led to war between the Transvaal, and Cape Colony and England. An ultimatum was actually sent to him, upon receipt of which he gave in and reopened the drifts. There also Lords Roberts and Kitchener crossed with their army into the Transvaal after the fall of Bloemfontein and Kroonstad. These drifts were fordable parts of the rivers, and there we crossed over in our carts, the water being up

to our axles. In the wet season, when the rivers are high, many of them would probably be unfordable at times.

On the opposite bank of the river, we were in the Orange River Colony, and some distance further on we arrived at the shaft of a coal mine, belonging to the Vereeniging Estates Company, which we descended to see what the interior of a coal mine looked like. The shaft was only a few hundred feet deep, which seemed nothing after the 2,000 feet we had gone down in the Robinson Deep-level Mine. We found ourselves in a network of great tunnels and chambers several times the size of those through which we had wandered in the gold mine. All were excavated through the solid coal, and there we saw negroes at work, nearly naked and looking as black as the coal itself. They harmonized well with their surroundings and might have been so many demons of the lower world, except for the good-natured looks on their shining, grimy, smiling faces; and the men seemed happy enough, in spite of their monotonous work.

The mine was much wetter and dirtier to move about in than the gold mine; water dripped incessantly from the roofs of the tunnels, and we found the wet ground very slippery to walk upon. We had to be careful not to touch the walls, for the coal left its marks if we did. We all carried lighted candles in our hands, for there seemed to be no fear whatever of any explosion from the naked flames.

The sun was setting when we regained the surface, and we had to return at once across the river and back to Vereeniging Station. The town, which was close by, was only a small place with a white population of 455, and about the same number of natives. The Estates Company

own all the industries of the place and employ all the labour; they have laid out the whole district with millions of fruit and other trees, and hope in time to induce a large population to reside there. It was there that Lord Kitchener met Generals Botha, Delarey and De Wet, and signed with them the treaty of peace which ended the Boer War; we passed the house where the historic event was consummated.

Messrs. Lewis and Marks certainly treated us well, for we found a most excellent dinner ready for us on the train, which was waiting on a siding until our trains should come along from Johannesburg and pick us up. The C train was not expected until nine o'clock, and after dinner we amused ourselves according to our liking in various ways, smoking, playing Bridge, or strolling about just as our tastes led us. For myself I spent the time in our carriage talking and telling anecdotes, and later on, when Mr. Sam Marks joined us, in discussing about the state and prospects of the Transvaal. We found him very interesting to talk to and full of information, and he was anxious to tell us all that he could. He seemed to have unbounded faith in the future of the country, and believed that in time Vereeniging itself, owing to its coal, iron, and other industries, would go far towards rivalling Johannesburg in prosperity.

We were still busy talking at nine o'clock when our train arrived, and in it were those of our party who had not come with us to Vereeniging. I took my old carriage with Sir B. L—— and S——, whom I found on board expecting me. During the afternoon I had missed my umbrella, and thinking that I might have left it at the Park Station, and mentioning this to an official of the Estates Company, he had telephoned about it. When I

joined the C train it was safely in my carriage; it had been found after a search and sent on in the train. This was one of the minor incidents showing how our interests were looked after by our friends in South Africa.

When we woke the next morning, our train was passing over what looked like a limitless expanse of flat open veldt, reminding me of the almost boundless prairies I knew so well in Texas. It extended in uninteresting monotony, dry and bare to the horizon on all sides. The day was sunny and fine and we were breathing the same clear, fresh, brisk air which we had come to associate with the veldt.

An hour later we reached Bloemfontein, and there found the station gaily decorated in our honour. I did not propose to go to an hotel—although I had been given an 'official' ticket to one of the best—but intended sleeping that night on the train in order to be ready for our start on our trek the first thing the next morning. So S—— and I, having no luggage to bother about, set off at once through the town to the Raadzaal, which was to be at our service as a lecture hall and for our convenience for reading and writing.

Bloemfontein looked more like an English country town than anything we had as yet seen in Africa. An air of drowsiness pervaded the place, which was restful to us after the rush and bustle of Johannesburg. I used to think that it owed its name to some 'fountain of flowers' in the locality, and looked to find them growing in profusion everywhere, but instead of that they were conspicuous by their absence, at any rate at the season when we were there. But I learned that the name Bloemfontein had a much less poetical origin, although one more strictly in accordance with fact.

About the latter end of the eighteenth century, a Dutch criminal, by name Jan Bloem, fled from justice to the then uninhabited wilds of these parts. There he made his head-quarters, and being joined by a lawless band of kindred spirits, he lived by making raids upon, and plundering, any Kaffir tribes he could come across. So bad was the conduct of this predatory band that for many years after Jan Bloem's death the natives went in terror of white people and refused to have any dealings whatever with them. It was to this scoundrel that the town of Bloemfontein owed its poetical name, and it gained its importance as capital of the Orange Free State owing to the presence of water in the neighbourhood.

A river called Bloem Spruit ran through the town—a stream as unlike a placid English river as can be imagined. During the dry season it is frequently waterless—when we saw its bed it was dust dry—while in the rainy summer-time it becomes a raging torrent, and often causes much damage by overflowing its banks and sweeping all before it. One terrible flood occurred on January 17, 1904, when tremendous havoc was wrought by the rushing waters, many traces of which were left at the time of our visit. The spruit has now been diverted into a wider and straighter channel to avoid the recurrence of such a mishap.

Over the Raadzaal I was surprised to see that the arms of the late Orange Free State and the words 'Oranje Vrei Staat' were still left, cut deeply in the stone.

We transacted our business, and made all arrangements for our trek the first thing next morning, and then strolled to the market-place, where, the day being Saturday, a fair amount of bustle and life was going on. It was interesting to stand and watch some of the auction sales. At one

stand cattle were being sold, and it was surprising to find that cows in milk were fetching from £25 to £35 each. These seemed very good prices for a pastoral country like the Orange River Colony. A goodly number of Boers, tall, lanky, and with long beards, were standing about, or attending to their teams of oxen. These bullock teams, so typical of South Africa, much interested us; there were usually sixteen oxen to each cart, the whole forming a procession about 100 feet long. Owing to the length of these teams, we found it difficult to get good photographs; they required to be taken in sections, panorama-like and from a considerable distance.

In the Town Hall close to the Market Square, we were officially received by the Mayor and Corporation and welcomed to Bloemfontein with the usual cordial speeches and compliments.

I went by myself to look over the cathedral, where a friendly cleric showed me round, and explained things to me. Saying 'good-bye,' he told me that I should meet him later on at His Excellency the Governor's garden-party at the Residency. When I did see him again, I found that he was Dr. Chandler, the Bishop of Bloemfontein, and was living in the house where my friends the Rev. G—— and Mrs. G—— resided when they stayed for a year in the town some time ago.

Close to the cathedral was the museum, an unpretentious building consisting of a long low room in the centre, with wings—square and plain—on either side. Great interest, however, attached to this place, and it was held in reverence by the Boers, for there in 1854 was signed the Bloemfontein Convention, by which the English guaranteed the independence of the Orange Free State, and there for the first three years of the new republic, the

Volksraad held their meetings. On the walls were a fair number of copies from various Bushmen's drawings found in the caves of the Drakensberg. Some of these were very clever, and I noticed that the older drawings seemed to be more artistic than the modern ones, as though the race had degenerated as they died out, which was probably the case.

From the museum I crossed over the road to the Residency, to the garden-party in our honour. After introductions, and signing our names in the visitors' book, we strolled about the extensive grounds listening to the band playing, or sat about and had tea. S—— and I were introduced to a Mr. and Mrs. B——, living in Bloemfontein, who invited us to spend the evening at their house. We had intended going to the lecture to be given by Arthur Hinks, F.R.A.S., upon the *Clouds of Magellan and the Milky Way,* and were doubtful whether we could accept the invitation, but being pressed, decided to do so. At eight o'clock therefore, Mr. B—— fetched us from the station in his trap and drove us out to his house, where we spent a pleasant evening with him and his family. A little rain came on while we were there, but it cleared up before we left, when we walked back to our train, and so to bed in our carriage.

CHAPTER XII

ON TREK—BLOEMFONTEIN TO ABRAHAM'S KRAAL

As already mentioned, a few of our more enterprising spirits had arranged to trek across the veldt from Bloemfontein to Kimberley, a three days' journey—in order to see the site of Cronje's capture at Paardeberg—instead of going round by train *via* De Aar with the rest of the party. S—— and I had entered for this trek, and as we should have to sleep for two nights on the open veldt, the South African Constabulary had very generously lent us an army rubber sheet and two blankets apiece for this purpose.

It had been raining all night and was still steadily pouring down, when the morning of our departure dawned, and the weather did not look at all promising for our three days' trek across the veldt. We had arranged for our Cape carts to come round to the station to pick us up at eight o'clock, which was a mistake on our part, for we should have gone round ourselves to the stables and claimed our carts there. We were eleven in all, seven men and four ladies—Miss P. B——, Miss (Dr.) H——, Miss (Dr.) B——, Mr. and Miss H——, Captain W——, Professor P——, Admiral M——, L. D——, S—— and myself.

If left to ourselves, we should have got on all right; but another party had been arranged independently by a few other members of the Association. They numbered nine,

and needed three carts, and had been beforehand with us at the stables, securing the three best conveyances available. Those they had left for us were poor affairs, much to our disgust.

This was very annoying, for Captain W——, acting as our leader, had selected these carts for us on the previous day. Both parties had to share one luggage van together, so that we were obliged to keep with one another in spite of the bad feeling caused by the cart incident. We looked upon them as interlopers who had upset our plans, and they looked down upon us as members of the 'unofficial party,' while they themselves were 'official,' so feeling ran high throughout the trek. Personally most of them were very agreeable indeed, and we were privately quite friendly, although 'officially' we did not recognize each other.

It added to the excitement of the trip and gave us plenty of food for comment, but on the whole the disagreement was a great pity, for had the two parties joined, the surplus of our stores would have been useful to them, and what they had in excess would often have made up for our deficiencies. For instance, before the trek was over, they ran short of bread and had to beg of us; while we were quite out of fruit, of which they had plenty.

Well, after much discussion at the stables with Boers, who pretended not to understand us, and after much grumbling, we had to accept our scratch lot of carts, and make a start in the rain at ten o'clock. Our friends who saw us off said good-bye, and officiously asked whether we had any last messages we would like taken to our relatives in England.

Our friend Mrs. B—— sent us round several packets of 'biltong,' in case we ran short of provisions on the way. We looked at the stuff and hesitated about taking it with

us. In appearance it resembled strips cut from Egyptian mummies, and seemed about as appetising; but we were assured that it was most nourishing, and not at all bad to the taste. The Boers lived upon it a great deal during the war, and it would be invaluable should we get lost on the veldt. The present was kindly and seriously meant, so we took it along with us, but I am thankful to say that we had no occasion to sample it.

We were the centre of a good deal of interest and some chaff from our friends as we drove through the town, past our reception rooms, and out on to the open veldt. The sky did not look very promising, it was steadily raining, and no one seemed to envy us our 'trek.'

Cape carts hold four persons, the driver and three others. S——, L. D—— and I had arranged to share one together, and it fell out fortunately—as will shortly appear—that ours was the only cart in which there were no ladies.

What was our driver, Boer, or Half-Breed? He might have been either from his looks; we could not get a word out of him; perhaps he did not understand English; at any rate he never vouchsafed replies to our questions. But we were undeceived later on, for as he warmed to his work of driving his team of four mules, he let drop first one and then another word or expression that made us almost jump out of our seats. They were some of the choicest expletives from the region of Billingsgate.

'Oh!' we said, 'you do speak English! Where did you learn it?'

'From the Tommies,' he chuckled.

We all said that it sounded like it, but was it not a pity to waste such fine language on a team of mules that probably only understood Dutch? If he must relieve his

feelings, could he not speak to the animals in the 'Taal'? they would know better what he meant, and our ears would not be offended. But remonstrances were of no avail and we had to put up from time to time with ejaculations the strength of which made us thankful indeed that we had no ladies in the cart.

Still, for all this, he turned out to be the most useful driver we had, to whom every one appealed when in difficulties. Perhaps if he had been a man to reason at all—which he was not,—he might have convinced us of the necessity of using strong language occasionally to his team.

Is there not a story extant of a bishop, who was travelling, as we were, through a wild and strange country, only he occupied a bullock wagon instead of a Cape cart? His driver, like ours, used expressions occasionally that were scarcely fit for episcopal ears, and the bishop remonstrated very warmly, saying that he would not have such language spoken in his presence. So the driver refrained. By and by, the team, tired of pulling the heavy cart through a difficult bit of ground, decided to take things more easily, and they all lay down and refused to budge. The urgings of the driver were useless, and nothing he could do would make them stir. The situation was serious, for the bishop had an important engagement before him, and time was pressing. Half-an-hour went by, an hour, an hour and a half, and still the team would not move. At length a faint voice was heard from the cart, 'I think, driver, you might swear a little now, but please be quick about it.' When the animals heard the well-known sounds, which the driver speedily addressed to them, they knew that business was meant, and leaping up they were soon on their way once more.

About noon the weather cleared, and when the sun burst out we soon became warm and dry; and then we discovered what a blessing the rain had been, for it had laid what would have been the exceedingly troublesome veldt dust. Our four mules went well and we could easily have taken the lead of the opposition's three carts, but our driver would not accede to our request to do so. As far as we could understand him, he said it was the rule on trek to keep the same order all through. The real reason, I think, was that his 'Baas' was taking the lead and he dared not pass him. So we kept first of our own party and fourth in the long procession of eight carts, and it was well there was no dust or the three leaders would have given us a good deal of theirs.

All the morning, for mile after mile, the veldt continued flat and uninteresting, and apparently there was to be no break in the monotony. We outspanned for lunch at one, and as we were searching for water a young farmer saw us and gave the information that we could get plenty at his place half-a-mile away, and also fire to boil it. So S—— and Miss H—— marched off for this purpose with our kettles, also taking with them a number of eggs, which they brought back boiled.

I stayed and chatted with the farmer, who told me that he had come out from England to fight in the war, and at the conclusion of peace had taken up land for settlement. He was quite satisfied with the life and with his progress so far, and looked forward to remaining in the country.

After lunch we inspanned and started on again in the same order as before, trekking throughout the afternoon across the monotonous veldt. Now and again we came across small typical South African kopjes—or great hills

of loosely aggregated boulders—looking like the tops of submerged mountains, if only we could have imagined the land to be the sea. Near one of these our driver began to chuckle, and we thought something choice in the way of language was coming, but after continuing for some time he finally explained.

'The Tommies tried to take that kopje, five hundred of them; but they couldn't'—all this in broken English.

'O, you were there?'

'Yes, I was there; we were two hundred; we fought for three days; I was wounded three times.'

And he showed us his wrist and his ankle, where we could see the healed scars of bullet-wounds, and in both cases the balls had passed clean through the limbs.

'The third time I was hit here,' slapping his thigh, 'they took me to that place,' and he pointed out a galvanized iron hut standing lonely on the withered veldt.

'I was there ill three months, but the Tommies didn't take the kopje,' and he chuckled again, for evidently the recollection pleased him.

'Did you like fighting?'

'No!' very decidedly; and so our driver having thawed at last, and his tongue loosened, we were able to pick up much useful information of an interesting kind, for he now pointed out to us very readily all the historic scenes of the neighbourhood that we passed.

He was called Joe, but we thought he said Job, and that name clung to him while we were together; also he told us the names of his mules, interspersing his information about them with a few choice expletives. As he never used this sort of language in ordinary conversation, but only to his animals, he evidently must have considered it the proper way to show his affection—for he was both

fond and very proud of them. He said that they were his own, and he had hired them for the trek to the Baas, pointing to the leading vehicle as he spoke.

Thus, in talks about the war with our driver, whose remarks, although simple, were often very interesting, and in viewing the sites which he pointed out to us, whose names called up long-forgotten or dimly remembered events from the recesses of our memories, the long hours wore away, until just after sunset we laagered for the night at Abraham's Kraal on the banks of the Modder River.

There was a Kaffir kraal not far off, from which I presume the place has its name, and there was also one small wooden hotel where the rival party at once decided to stay. Only shelter was to be had, no beds, and I believe the ladies slept upon the floor in one of the rooms, while the men made themselves comfortable on the stoep outside.

For ourselves, disdaining all such appearances of civilization implied in shelter of any sort, we moved on to the banks of the river to prepare our evening meal. It was already almost too dark to see to gather wood to light our fire; we could not properly distinguish between green and dry stuff, and what we did collect, with many painful pricks of the hands—for South African shrubs are provided with the most vicious thorns imaginable—was too soft and sappy to burn properly, and only spluttered and went out. We knew there was plenty of dry wood about, but we could not see it, so we broke up and used one of our deal provision boxes and this served well enough.

Admiral M——, with the foresight of an old sailor, had thoughtfully provided himself with two lanterns and some candles, which he produced at a critical moment, and these gave us light for our cooking operations, which were

simple enough, and were confined to boiling some water for our tea. The Modder water had a bad reputation; even the natives hesitated to drink it; it was not far off that our troops, while besieging Cronje, drank of it and caught the terrible epidemic of 'enteric' which slew so many thousands of brave fellows. We were, therefore, very careful to drink only such as was first well boiled, and we suffered no bad consequences therefrom.

After our meal was over and the washing-up done, we talked for a while by the camp fire, revelling in the novelty of our situation, until, the night being dark, and our intention being to rise very early the next morning, we considered it wise to go to bed. The sheets and blankets were distributed, a quiet spot under the trees was selected for the ladies, and 'good-nights' were said to them.

This done we men stumbled about and felt our way in the dark among the prickly mimosa bushes, looking for likely places in which to deposit ourselves. Captain W——, more venturesome than the rest, went further afield, and nearly broke his head by tumbling sheer into a deep donga; fortunately he was only shaken, but not hurt, and having found the shelter in this abrupt fashion, he decided to stay and make his bed there. S—— and Professor P—— joined him more cautiously, while I lay near them on the sloping bank at the top of the donga. Admiral M—— slept in proper trek fashion under a cart, and the rest of the party located themselves close by. Wrapping ourselves in our blankets, we were soon comfortably trying to get to sleep, for it was decidedly pleasant lying thus in the open air, which had not yet grown cold. A mosquito soon began to get to work on my face, but fortunately I had a net in my bag, and spreading this

over my head I was able to defy all insect pests in comfortable security.

I must have fallen asleep very soon, for I remembered nothing until the sound of a post-horn woke me up. Could this be Captain W—— sounding the reveille? and where did he get the horn from? No, the night was still very dark, and nobody but the horn-blower in the distance was about. The sound came nearer and I heard what must have been a mail-cart go rushing past, and then all was quiet again. I tried to sleep once more, but now the air was so intensely cold that I got up and felt for my overcoat, which I had hung on a bush close by, and this I spread over me for extra warmth. But all was no good, sleep had fled from me for the rest of the night; I suppose the hardness of the ground—which I had not felt at first, but which was now painfully in evidence—the novelty of the situation and the intense coldness contributed to this result.

I had happily chosen my bed on sloping ground that looked towards the east, and as I lay and half dozed, opening my eyes occasionally, I noticed how the stars were rising one by one in front of me. The clearness of the frosty air was wonderful, and I do not remember ever in my life to have seen the heavens look more brilliant. I could not get up and walk about for it was too dark, and I should only have got into mischief among the prickly bushes and broken ground, so I lay there and watched the glorious celestial panorama, gradually unfolding itself above me. Jupiter and Venus, like two sister stars of unequal beauty, rose as I watched; the well-known constellation of Orion came up with its beautiful companion-star Sirius, the brightest fixed star in the skies; other gems shone out in the east. I had never before seen such

a brilliant galaxy under such favourable circumstances of atmosphere and situation.

My thoughts went out to my friends at home, all comfortably asleep in their warm beds, and I tried to think of their astonishment, could they have seen me lying out under the glittering stars of limitless space, on the open soil of South Africa, at Abraham's Kraal, where our soldiers had one of the stiffest fights of the war, and on the banks of the Modder River which a few miles further on flowed by the scene of General Cronje's historic surrender.

CHAPTER XIII

ON TREK—VISIT TO CRONJE'S LAAGER

JUST about five o'clock the eastern sky began to grow lighter, and we all rose up from our hard, cold beds, shouting to each other our hearty 'good-mornings' in the grey of the shivering dawn. Some gathered sticks for the fire, while others ran down to the river to warm themselves, and to wash in the stream.

We had breakfast at six, and afterwards packed up our things—our blankets being wringing wet with a very heavy dew—and then Miss H——, L. D—— and I crossed the river at a dry ford, and walked forward in the warm sunshine for a mile or two, thinking that the carts would pick us up as they came on. We had taken the wrong direction, however, and were unaware of it until we were called back by a negro who, happening to be in the neighbourhood with a bicycle, had been sent after us by our friends. The morning was lovely and we had thoroughly enjoyed the walk, which had thawed our limbs and exercised our stiffened joints; but we were sorry to think we had kept the party waiting and hurried back as fast as we could. We need not have agitated ourselves; our companions were still waiting at the encampment for the rival trekkers, who had not yet put in an appearance, and it was after eight before we made a

start. I spent the time among the natives at the Kaffir kraal close by, where I took some photographs.

We found that our proper road did not cross the Modder River at this spot, but that it kept to the same side of the river for the greater part of the day. We soon left the stream and found ourselves once more on the apparently endless veldt. In the distance, seemingly not many miles off, a few flat-topped kopjes could be seen, but they were actually a great distance away, for we did not reach the nearest of them until just before sunset. The clearness of the air on the veldt causes objects to appear much closer than they really are, and for this reason, during the earlier stages of the war, our soldiers proved such poor marksmen, for they almost always under-estimated their enemies' distances.

There was little to break the monotony of our morning's journey, and when, just after one, we outspanned at Poplar Grove for lunch, we were still on the same flat, shelterless veldt. We could not have halted at a more open place, or one more exposed to the wind that was raising clouds of dust about us, and we grumbled very much at our long Boer guide, 'the Baas,' who, however, was impervious to arguments.

The mules were always taken out of harness directly we outspanned, and they used to celebrate their liberty, by lying down, rolling over and over in the soft sand, and kicking up their legs in the air in their great enjoyment, until such time as their drivers came to lead them away to water, if water was anywhere near. At Poplar Grove a belt of trees, about half-a-mile off, showed where the river ran, and probably this was why our guide selected the spot: although he might with advantage have taken us among the trees.

I remembered how wet our sleeping-blankets were when we packed them up in the morning, so the first thing I did was to get them out of the cart, unroll them, and spread them in the hot sunshine to dry: they were still wringing wet, but dried thoroughly while we were at lunch.

As we were eating, a motor car passed us, in which were Sir C. S. M—— and three other members of our party, who had left Bloemfontein that same morning and hoped to reach Kimberley before nightfall. They were trekking under modern conditions; but we preferred our time-honoured, if slower Cape carts, which gave us a better idea of what old-fashioned trekking really meant. As the motorists passed us they left a message for me to the effect that my luggage had turned up. As, to my knowledge, it had never been lost, I was unable to understand the purport of the message, nor is its meaning clear to this day.

Inspanning after an hour's rest, we started on once more. Occasionally the track brought us close to the river, among the trees which everywhere marked its course: then the stream would wind away from us, the trees would disappear, and we would be out on the open veldt again.

During the afternoon we called at a Boer farm for water, for we had heard of a good well near. On entering the house, we found all the family drinking coffee in their kitchen or living room; they welcomed us solemnly, each in turn shaking hands with us. The eldest daughter was apparently the only one who could speak English readily —at any rate she did most of the talking. When we asked for milk, they shook their heads and said they had none, but they invited us to join them at coffee, which, however, we were obliged to decline, as we were pressed for time.

They had a few nice skins of the springbok in the house

ON TREK—MEAL-TIME ON THE VELDT

and offered them to us for a shilling each, a remarkably cheap price we thought, so we took all they had. I suppose they are of little value to those who live so far out on the veldt, where these animals abound. We had seen during our trek a large number of the pretty creatures, often as many as a thousand at a time in a herd; sometimes we came across great flocks of cranes, and our carts used frequently to start many strange forms of veldt life as we went along.

We were already late and were anxious to reach Cronje's laager before sunset; our guide was clamouring to get on at once, so we bade our friendly Boers good-bye and came away.

Shortly afterwards, we crossed the Modder River at a shallow ford; and this was rather an exciting undertaking, for the banks were very steep on either side, and the water had to be taken at a rush. Our animals were wonderfully sure-footed and we entered the stream in fine style; but in mid-stream they all stopped to drink, and no inducement would get them on until they had had enough. We dismounted when the further side was reached in order to lighten the load up the steep banks, and to take a few photographs.

Another half-hour's drive brought us to the site of Cronje's surrender; where for about the space of a square mile the ground was covered with the *débris* left by the Boers. Thousands of meat and biscuit-tins lay about in all directions as though a huge picnic had lately been held there; parts of broken wagons, carts and gun-carriages were on all sides; old rusty wheels and heaps of scrap iron littered the ground in every direction. I never saw a scene more out of keeping with the desolateness and loneliness of the surrounding veldt, or one that

brought more forcibly home to my mind the wastefulness of war.

It was very sad to see the hundreds of skeletons of horses lying all over the place, the bones eaten bare by the birds and ants, and dried, and bleached as white as paper. We drove through all this confusion and litter to the further end of the laager, past the commemoration monument, and outspanned close to the Modder River, near to a small shanty standing on the battle-field. There we collected wood from the broken-up ammunition carts and wagons to make our fires and boil the water, which we fetched from the river.

Some of us poked about among the *débris*, picking up bullets, and handfuls of cartridge-cases, many of which had been fired off, but the greater number had been burst by shells exploding the whole cartful, for we found that these were generally lying in masses together; others wandered along the banks of the river, looking at the great holes excavated by the Boers to hide their women and children from the terrific shell fire. Daylight was fast fading; we had only half-an-hour before it was quite dark, and this was far too short a time in which to see such a place properly.

We made our meal by candle-light, amid the strangest surroundings surely that it was possible to conceive. It seemed uncanny to be eating on the field where thousands had suffered so terribly, and I do not think that I ever sat down with less appetite than I did on that occasion.

The moon had not yet reached its first quarter, but it gave a little light, and I utilized it by trying to find the Boer trenches which had defended the laager. Capt. W—— and S—— had gone on the same errand, and when I ran across them they were able to put me in the right direction,

so that I found the trenches with ease. They were wonderful works, as deep as a man is high, and about five feet wide. Hundreds of men could lie hidden in them and move about in all directions in safety. It was unfortunate that the light was so bad, for I was unable to see them as well as I could have wished.

Later on I tried to find my way again to the trenches with Miss P. B——, but was unable to do so. We made a bold attempt, scrambling across the rough scrub-covered veldt for nearly a mile, in the semi-darkness, in the direction which seemed to me to be the one I had previously taken, but we never came across them.

It had been originally intended by both parties to spend the night on the laager, but now we were on the spot some did not like the idea. They thought that even yet 'enteric' might impregnate the place, but I fancy that deep down in their minds was a feeling of repugnance to sleeping amid such surroundings. We were all anxious to be in Kimberley next day, in time for Sir William Crookes' lecture on *Diamonds* in the evening, and there seemed to be some doubt of our doing this if we did not press forward for a few more miles before resting; so we decided to utilize what little light the moon gave and trek on as long as we could see to do so.

Our driver Joe entertained us during the long evening hours by singing Boer songs. He had a good voice and we enjoyed the performance very much, infinitely preferring it to his endearing remarks to his mules. There was a plaintiveness about many of the airs that took our fancy, although we could not understand a word of the language.

Captain W—— joined us after a time, changing places with S——, and when he and Joe began to converse they

found that they had fought against one another at more than one place during the war.

'Where did you hide away those guns you had at ——, we only captured two, and we know you had eight?' asked Captain W——.

But Joe only chuckled; he was not going to give his side away.

'The war is over, there can be no reason why you should not tell us now.'

'Oh, no,' chuckled Joe, 'we want them for the time when we shall fight again,' and this seemed to tickle him immensely—but never a word would he say as to the whereabouts of the guns.

'Were you with Cronje?' I asked.

Yes he had been there, but had escaped by swimming across the river and passing through our lines at night. About one thousand escaped from the laager in this way, he told us.

'What did you do afterwards?'

'Then I fought at the kopje where I was wounded.'

'And after that?'

'I joined De Wet and was with him until the last. I was on his commissariat staff.'

This is putting into English what he told us in his broken language, and thus we chatted and entertained ourselves during that dark evening's trek.

We passed Paardeberg at half-past ten; the site was marked by two kopjes some distance apart, and the road went between them. Half-an-hour later we stopped, and outspanned, for the moon was nearly on the horizon, and it was too dark to proceed further. Once again we bivouacked upon the open veldt; there was more wind stirring, and the air was not so intensely cold as on the previous night.

S—— had a habit of calling out in his sleep to one or other of his companions. He did this in such a natural way that one thought he really was awake, and that something was the matter; all the while he was 'in a most sound sleep.' Once during the night, he woke us up in this manner; but by this time I had grown accustomed to his vagaries and did not stir at his call. Professor P—— also distinguished himself in the same way, but I think he was actually awake.

'What is that whizzing through the camp?' he called out.

Nobody knew to what he alluded, and I do not think he knew himself; at any rate these little interruptions passed unheeded, and we managed to get a good night's rest in spite of them.

Two items of bad news were given us when we awoke next morning: the first was that the Kaffirs, or 'some one,' had drunk all our store of water; and the second was that two of the mules had strayed away in the night and were nowhere to be found. I wonder whether these were what the Professor had heard 'whizzing through the camp'; but certainly whizzing is a word that hardly describes a mule's usual method of procedure—at any rate in daylight, whatever he may do by night.

Our ladies declared that breakfast without coffee or tea was not to be thought of, so we decided to postpone the function until we came to water, a rash decision which we had occasion to regret later on. Our driver Joe was searching for the lost mules; but as far as the eye could reach across the flat expanse of veldt, neither hunter nor animals were to be seen. We waited some time for him, until it was at length decided by our tall Boer leader to make up our teams by taking two of the animals belong-

ing to the baggage cart, so that we might all start on and lose no more time. The baggage wagon was to be left behind for Joe to bring along when he had succeeded in finding the mules.

We inspanned and started on at eight o'clock, in the same order as on the previous day, while S——, L. D—— and I had to take turns at driving our team. This might have been easy enough with the mules we had had hitherto, but evidently one if not two of these were the animals that had strayed, and we were now reduced to three mules and a pony, the latter a very poor creature indeed. While he was fresh we managed fairly well, but after a time he began to drag, for he could not possibly do the work the mules did, and needed constant urging and whipping. Eventually this ceased to have any effect, and from being the leading cart of our party we dropped to the rear, and were soon a long way behind the rest.

S—— took the reins at first and managed them very well; he seemed quite to the manner born, and filled our souls with envy and a desire to emulate him. It was all plain going for him while the pony was fresh, but driving was no easy task when the poor wretch began to fail. However, he kept the team well together for about two hours, but when I took the reins the pony was almost worn out, he did not attempt to pull and was being dragged along by the three mules, so that our progress was very slow.

Imagine me in this predicament, trying to get the team along. I had driven two animals before, but never four, and there was a complication of reins that sometimes bewildered me. Breakfastless and hungry, my throat parched for lack of drink; breathing in the fine veldt dust with every breath, and yet obliged all the time constantly

and with ceaseless exertions to urge on the almost dropping pony.

The handling of the long Boer whip needed an apprenticeship in itself, for the lash had an annoying habit of catching in the rear of the cart, when it did not actually caress the necks, or take off the hats of the sitters behind. Often it would get entangled in the harness in a most annoying way, and one was obliged to get down to set it free. Once it twisted up in the wheel and was wrenched out of my hand. Even when it did fall clear of all obstacles, it had an awkward knack of hitting the wrong animal, so that many a time the willing and able mules suffered for the unwilling and incompetent pony. Then rain began to fall, and the hood of the cart had to be put up for shelter, which interfered more than ever with the proper swinging of the whip. Evidently the wielding of this weapon gracefully and effectively was an accomplishment only to be indulged in after a long course of lessons.

What added to the troubles of the driver was the continual flow of sarcastic comments which fell from the lips of the two who were sitting comfortably in the dry, beneath the shelter of the hood. Altogether driving across the veldt was no sinecure, and by and by there were not so many volunteers for the task as there had been at the start.

L. D—— took his turn at the reins without much better results, but we all found the exercise of driving a grand preparation for that breakfast we were to get when we came to water. This, however, we did not do until close upon one o'clock, when, with many sighs of relief, we drew up at our stopping place, delighted to find that the precious fluid came from an artesian well and was both good and plentiful.

Risking 'enteric' and all the other ills which were threatened to water drinkers in South Africa, we drank our fill. Only those who have craved for it for hours, as we had done, under the hot semi-tropical sun for the greater part of the time, with throats parched and thirst aggravated by the fine dry dust, can realize the exquisite pleasure of a long draught of sweet cool water.

Fires were lighted and we prepared our last meal of the trek. The rain had passed—indeed, it had not been much at any time—the sun was shining in its strength; there was a gusty wind blowing and the dust was very troublesome. In honour of our final meal, H—— cooked for us in a special grill some bacon which he had been saving to the last; but when it was finished, owing to the dust which had not helped the culinary operations, it did not turn out the dainty dish we had looked for, and was given over to our drivers, who, I suppose, ate it. We contented ourselves with eggs, some excellent soup made from a number of little packets of various flavours, plenty of potted meats, cake, and dusty bread and butter. We could not afford to be particular, with our breakfastless appetites upon us.

After this much-needed refreshment we started once more on our last lap to Kimberley; a drive with all the morning's difficulties accentuated, but otherwise uneventful. For a long time before we reached the town we were passing among the tailings' heaps from the diamond mines, and at half-past three we reached the station, where we found the C train in its siding. I had to sleep on the train while in Kimberley, so that my luggage was still in the carriage, and I was able to scramble into a change of clothes and rush round to the Public Gardens in time for the Mayor's garden-party in our honour. There I was

congratulated on my safe arrival by those friends who had reached Kimberley comfortably by train some hours earlier. The tea was most gratifying, for I was still very thirsty, the latter part of our trek having been dusty, and the task of driving the team of mules and our nearly exhausted pony very fatiguing.

CHAPTER XIV

KIMBERLEY—CONCERNING DIAMONDS

OUR reception rooms were in the Town Hall, and there I spent the evening writing and reading until it was time to hear Sir William Crookes' lecture upon *Diamonds*, illustrated with lantern slides. His discourse on this interesting subject was one of the finest we had the pleasure of listening to during our trip, and it kept the attention of a very large audience riveted until some time past eleven o'clock. The many illustrations were good, and the experiments exceedingly clever and instructive; it was said that their preparation and display cost no less than £600; but how far this is true I do not know.

Sir William Crookes showed how from very earliest times diamonds had fascinated mankind. As late as 1667 no less a scientific body than the Royal Society seriously asked Sir Philiberto Vernatti 'whether diamonds grow again after three or four years in the same places where they have been digged out?' and received the answer, 'Never, or at least as the memory of man can attain to.' Even forty years ago Professor Maskelyne was obliged to admit that the formation of the gem was an unsolved problem. The lecturer now felt justified in saying that, if the diamond problem was not actually solved, in every probability it would shortly be so.

There were five mines around Kimberley that were

especially famous, the De Beers, Dutoitspan, Bulfontein, Wesselton and Kimberley, which were all contained in a precious circle of three and a half miles in diameter. They were irregular shaped, round or oval pipes, extending vertically downwards to unknown depths, retaining about the same diameter throughout, and were supposed to be volcanic outlets filled up with a heterogeneous mixture of rocks in which was the famous blue clay where the diamonds are found. Prospecting for the priceless stones was difficult and was sheer speculation in the absence of surface signs, and therefore accident had been the chief factor in their discovery.

It was difficult to say how the pipes were originally formed; but the diamonds were evidently long anterior and had been forced up into them from below. The mixture in which they were found was full of all kinds of minerals, forming a sort of 'geological plum-pudding.' The blue ground did not show any signs of igneous action, nor were the fragments in the breccia fused at the edges. It might be that each volcanic pipe was the vent of some great laboratory, buried at vast depths, where the temperature was comparable to that of the electric furnace, where the pressure was fiercer than in our puny laboratories, and the melting-point higher, and where masses of liquid carbon had taken centuries, perhaps thousands of years to cool and harden. Nature with unlimited temperature, inconceivable pressure, and gigantic material, with measureless time and appalling energy, produced without stint the dazzling, radiant, beautiful, coveted crystals.

The ash left after burning a diamond invariably contained iron, which gave support to the theory that they had separated from molten iron, and it was a reasonable assumption to start with that there were masses of molten

iron at great pressure, high temperature and sufficient depth, holding carbon in solution, ready to crystallize out on cooling.

According to the tables furnished by the De Beers Company, the yield of the De Beers and Kimberley Mines had declined as the depth increased. At the same time the value of the stones had risen, and diamonds were more expensive to-day than at any previous time. About half a carat, per load of 1,600 pounds, was now the average produced by these mines. Ceaseless toil of skilled and black labour went on day and night to win a few stones wherewith to deck my lady's finger. All this to gratify the vanity of woman! 'and man also,' as I heard a lady beside me whisper.

The diamonds from each mine had a distinctive character, and so uniform were the characteristics that an experienced buyer could tell at once the locality of any particular parcel of stones.

One of the greatest labour-saving discoveries, in connection with this industry, was made by a Mr. Fred Kirsten, an employé of the De Beers Company, who found in 1897 that diamonds alone of all minerals contained in the blue ground adhered to grease. The sorting was now done on this principle by machines, whose power of distinction was superior to the keenest eye of the native. These machines were called pulsators, from their peculiar shaking movement while in operation. By an ingenious contrivance the lecturer here illustrated this peculiarity of the diamond, throwing on the screen a picture of diamonds flowing over grease and sticking to it.

After describing the methods of diamond mining, the lecturer went on to say that sometimes as many as 8,000 carats, of about £10,000 in value, were separated in one

day, while the Kimberley mines produced about two millions of carats every year, and since their discovery no less than ten tons of diamonds had been taken out, valued at £60,000,000. And yet there was no keeping pace with the demand.

Diamonds weighing over one ounce were not infrequent at Kimberley. The largest stone from these mines weighed 428½ carats, or nearly four ounces troy, while the biggest known diamond in the world had recently been discovered at the New Premier Mine near Pretoria. It was called the Cullinan, and weighed 3,025¾ carats, or 1·37 lb. avoirdupois; and yet it was only a fragment, probably less than half of a distorted octahedral crystal, the other portions of which still awaited discovery by some fortunate miner. Its clearness throughout was remarkable, the stone being absolutely limpid like water. The second largest diamond in the world was the one found at the Jagersfontein Mine a few years ago, and weighed 970 carats, or over half-a-pound.

Speculations as to the probable origin of the diamond had been greatly forwarded by patient research, and particularly by improved means of obtaining high temperatures, an advance we owed principally to the researches of Professor Moissan. None but microscopic stones had ever been made artificially, the largest being less than one millimetre across. In lustre, crystalline form, density and hardness, they were identical with the natural ones.

It was known that the diamonds come out of the mines, but how did they get in? how were they formed? what was their origin? was there any theory? Mr. Gardner Williams, our greatest living expert, said he had none. All that could be said was that in some unknown manner

carbon, which existed deep down in the internal regions of the earth, was changed from its black and uninviting appearance to the most beautiful gem that ever saw the light of day.

A theory has been advanced that they came direct from the skies, in meteor showers, and in confirmation of this it was actually the fact that diamonds had been discovered in meteoric iron. Notably in Arizona, many had thus been found in different specimens of the Canyon Diabolo meteorites, and the lecturer exhibited on the table a fine slab of meteorite weighing about seven pounds.

But this descent of precious stones in Arizona might be called a freak of nature rather than a normal occurrence. It was but one more proof that the elementary composition of the stars and the earth were pretty much the same, and that similar conditions, as with us, existed among the bodies in space. Probably on more than one occasion a meteorite freighted with jewels had fallen as a star from the sky.

The diamonds were evidently not formed *in situ* in the blue ground, their genesis must have been at vast depths under enormous pressure. More fragments and splinters than perfect crystals were found. In one instance pieces picked up at different levels had been accurately fitted together, pointing to the conclusion that the blue ground was not their true matrix, for nature did not make fragments of crystals.

The diamond belonged to the isometric system of crystallography; the prevailing form being octahedral. Many had their surfaces beautifully marked with equilateral triangles, interlaced, and of varying sizes. These were supposed by Gustav Rose to indicate the probability that

the diamonds at some previous time had been exposed to incipient combustion. Such markings could not correctly be reproduced artificially.

Diamonds nearly all bore indications of internal strain; and by means of the polarizing microscope, the lecturer projected some pictures on the screen, and explained by the resultant colours how great the strain was. On rotating the polarizer, the black cross most frequently seen revolved round a particular point in the inside of the crystal, and on examining this point with a high power, a slight flaw, or more rarely a minute cavity was sometimes seen. This cavity was filled with gas at enormous pressure, and the strain was set up by the effort of the gas to escape. It was not uncommon for a diamond to explode soon after it reached the surface; some had been known to burst in the pockets of the miners, or when held in the warm hand, and large stones were more liable to do this than small ones.

Diamonds varied considerably in hardness, and different parts of the same crystal differed in their resistance to cutting and grinding. Some of the hardest stones came from New South Wales. There was great difficulty in cutting the first parcel of these, and it was feared they would be valueless on this account; but with improved appliances the trouble disappeared. Cutting-mills worked at a usual speed of 2,400 revolutions per minute, but in the case of the Koh-i-noor this had to be increased to 3,000 revolutions for some parts of the stone.

The lecturer then gave an interesting experiment to show the hardness of these gems. On the flattened apex of a conical block of steel, he placed a diamond, and upon it he brought down a second cone of steel. By means of

the lamp he threw the image of this on the screen, and we saw the cones forced together by hydraulic power until the pressure on the diamond was 170 tons to the square inch. We could see the diamond gradually squeezed into the steel block without suffering the slightest injury itself. Later on at the De Beers office, I had the opportunity of examining and handling this block of steel, with the diamond deeply imbedded in it.

The only serious rival to the diamond in point of hardness was the metal tantalum. In order to bore a hole in this metal, a diamond drill was used revolving at a rate of 5,000 revolutions per minute. For three days and nights this speed was kept up, when it was found that only a small depression ½ mm. deep had been drilled, and it was a moot point which had suffered the most damage, the diamond or the tantalum.

The diamond was invaluable for its hardness, but the reason why it was so much prized was because it was one of the most refracting and reflecting substances in nature. This was made the most of in the cutting, for the facets on the lower side were inclined so that light fell on them at an angle of 24° 13′ when all the incident light was totally reflected. A well-cut stone should appear opaque by transmitted light, except at a small spot in the middle.

All the light falling on the front of the stone was reflected from the facets, and the light passing into it was reflected from the interior surfaces, and refracted into colours as it passed out into the air, giving rise to the lightenings, the effulgence and the coruscations for which the diamond was supreme above all other gems. The crystals were found in various colours, white, black, yellow being the

most common, while green and pink ones were also found, the latter being exceedingly valuable.

The lecturer then showed a set of magnificent cut diamonds; by transmitted light they were black, while by reflected light they filled the room with radiance, dazzle and colour.

Brühl had put forward the speculation that the diamond may be the last member of the paraffin series of which marsh-gas was the first.

After exposure for some time to the sun, many diamonds glowed in a dark room; and some were fluorescent, appearing milky in sunlight. One beautiful green diamond in the lecturer's collection, when phosphorescing in a good vacuum, gave almost as much light as a candle, and one could read easily by its rays. But the time had hardly come for diamonds to be used as domestic illuminants. They were also remarkable in another way, for they could be at once detected by the Röntgen rays, being extremely transparent to them, whereas imitation diamonds made of glass were perfectly opaque to the rays.

Sir William Crookes then showed a very expensive but striking and suggestive experiment, which was the resolving of a diamond into graphite. We saw the gem gradually heated to about 3,600° Centigrade, when it began to swell, erupting and changing until it collapsed into black and valueless graphite. Experiments of this sort did not bear much repetition, for the graphite cannot be reconverted into diamonds.

After this expensive experiment, the lecturer brought his most interesting discourse to a close by stating that the diamond was the outcome of a series of titanic convulsions, and that these precious gems underwent a series of

strange and potent vicissitudes before they could blaze on a ring or a tiara.

I have said it was past eleven before the lecture was over, so I returned to the train at once, where, having the carriage entirely to myself and being very tired after my long and varied day, I slept soundly, and made up for the disturbed rest of the two previous nights on the veldt.

CHAPTER XV

VISITS TO DIAMOND MINES—DYNAMITE EXPLOSIONS—UNDERGROUND WORKINGS

THE morning was brilliantly sunny when I awoke, and after an early breakfast, I walked across to the station, where two special trains were waiting to take out a large party to the De Beers and Wesselton Mines at eight o'clock. It was only a short run among mine heads and immense tailings' heaps, which looked like huge ramparts all over the place; and we could easily see how Kimberley was but a vast mining camp. Although some of the streets were fine and wide, the place on the whole had a camp-like, temporary, galvanized-iron sort of appearance, far from beautiful. Without the mines the town would probably return to little more than its original veldt-like condition, for there did not seem to be much else to keep the place going.

At the De Beers Mine we saw all the surface works and how the rock was brought out of the ground, and tipped into trolleys to be run up to the crushing mills. This was, of course, only necessary in the case of the hard stone, the softer clay was not crushed, but was conveyed to great enclosed areas called 'floors,' where it was laid out to crumble by the action of the air and sun, for from three to twelve months as required. It was afterwards collected and passed through the later processes, which the crushed

rock had to undergo, eventually finding its way over the pulsators, which allowed the valueless stones to slip away, while the diamonds remained adhering to the greased surfaces.

We saw the machinery, the crushing mills and the various other processes in operation at the De Beers Mine, and then we passed on to the Wesselton, which was a huge hole in the ground, where the workings were on the surface and not deep in the earth, as at the De Beers. The pictures of this mine which one often sees, represent it fairly well; it was an enormous pit in the earth, some hundreds of feet deep in parts, and more than a quarter of a mile across. In it were several gangs of natives, looking like flies on the distant floor of the great basin, laboriously drilling holes in the hard ground, or into the face of the rock at the sides. Others were shovelling up the earth and running it off on trolleys to the mills or floors. These men were so far below us, and there were so many of them, that the place seemed like a huge ant-hive into which we had the privilege of peeping. We did not go down into the hole, but sat on benches, or stood in a great semicircle at the top, waiting for the show which was to follow.

A series of grand explosions were being arranged for us; and when the various holes were finished, the dynamite cartridges—such as we had seen manufactured at the explosive works belonging to this company at Somerset West—were placed in them, and the trains laid. The alarm signals had been previously sounded, upon which the men quitted their work and began to troop out of the mine; but it took a long time to get the pit clear. As soon as there were only a few foremen left they fired the trains, and then quickly hid themselves in safety-sheds built for the purpose.

Suddenly a great mass of the face of the earth in front of us seemed to leap forward, curl over, and dissolve into dust and smoke, and immediately afterwards we heard the roar of the explosion. When the air cleared somewhat, we could see that many tons of the blue clay had fallen down from the side of the great pit. Another explosion followed, and then a third and a fourth, all in different directions; earth was tumbling down everywhere; the pit filled with smoke and dust; the noise grew deafening, and the whole place looked like a veritable inferno. Explosion after explosion went on for a long while, evidently an especially fine series for our edification, for there must have been at least a hundred of them.

When the show was all over, the interior of the great pit was invisible: we seemed to be looking down into the gaping crater of an immense volcano, full of the sulphurous smoke of the nether world. Then we returned to our trains and so found our way back to Kimberley.

I had tickets to descend the Kimberley Mine, which was situated close to the railway station, and there S—— and I dressed in miner's clothes and went down with a guide to the 1,700 ft. level, where we spent a most interesting hour, wandering about the tunnels and chambers where the diamonds were found. The work we saw going on was similar to that which we had seen in the Robinson Deep-level Mine in Johannesburg, but we did not find it so easy at first to trace the blue rock among the ordinary rock. Our guide was at great pains to explain everything, and we soon were able to tell which was the true 'blue' and which was not. No clay was found in the deep levels of this mine; it was all hard rock.

We were all three in a small tunnel when a dynamite explosion took place in an adjoining one, the concussion

almost knocking us over, and at once putting out all our lights. When we were thus left in absolute darkness, we realized what it was to be down in the bowels of the earth, shut away by nearly two thousand feet of solid rock from the light of the upper world. The explosion had come so very unexpectedly that we were much startled, and if we had been alone we should have been in an awkward predicament, for neither of us was a smoker, and we were consequently unprovided with matches. However, our guide had plenty and he quickly relighted our candles, apologizing for not having warned us that explosions might be expected.

As we were passing along another tunnel, through which trolleys full of the blue rock were running on rails, two of them struck some obstacle and fell over sideways only a few feet ahead of us. Had we been closer, a serious accident might have happened, for the tunnel was narrow, and the heavy stuff, about a ton in all, must have toppled on to us.

However, we came up to the surface again in safety, greatly interested by all we had seen, and then we were conducted over the surface works of the mine to inspect the machinery for crushing the rock. The stamps were enormously powerful, but in spite of their immense weight the diamonds passed under them uninjured, owing to their excessive hardness; the probability of a diamond being crushed did not seem to trouble the officials. Nearly all the labourers who were doing unskilled work in feeding and attending to these stamps were convicts in uniform, hired from the Government.

The most interesting shed that we saw was the one where a large number of pulsators were at work sorting the diamonds. As Sir William Crookes had told us, and shown by experiments in his lecture, the precious gems

had an affinity for the grease with which the trays were covered and stuck to them, while the other stones passed freely over. The pulsators were a series of machines fitted with these trays vibrating rapidly and regularly—hence their name—and streams of water full of crushed rock poured continually over them to the further end, where, falling into conduits, they passed out of the house, carrying away everything but the diamonds which had been left sticking to the trays. It was very interesting to stand and watch these automatic sorters and to notice how the diamonds, immediately they appeared, were instantly caught by the grease and adhered to it.

No hand-sorting could possibly be as certain and reliable as the pulsators; but so valuable are the precious stones that every grain which left this house in the stream of water, had to be again and again sorted over by hand to insure that none were left. Even after this the *débris* could be disposed of at a fair price per ton to outside men, who having little works of their own, managed to make a living out of the chance diamonds, which, in spite of all the careful picking over, they still found left in the mass.

After inspecting all the various operations, we went to the offices where we saw displayed on tables a number of little heaps of uncut stones, sorted according to size, colour and mines. We were allowed to handle diamonds of enormous value, and their merits and peculiarities were pointed out to us. The diamonds shown in this office were priced at about £80,000. Garnets and olivine were also found in the diamondiferous rock and clay, and these were separated, but were not reckoned of much value; and as we came out we were each given a mixed handful as a memento of our trip. But to the great regret of our

wives and daughters, we were not presented with a handful of diamonds at the same time.

All unskilled work at the De Beers group of mines in Kimberley was done by Kaffirs. To guard against robbery, and for the proper organization of their labour, they were kept in compounds similar to those we had seen in Johannesburg. We went over one of these places and found the men looking contented and happy, and hugely enjoying the games and dances in which they were engaged. We saw representatives of most of the South African tribes living in harmony, oblivious of their tribal rivalries. A large store, full of all necessities and even luxuries for the men, was within the compound. When I visited there I was attracted by the appearance of the oranges and bought half-a-dozen, and they were the finest and cheapest I ate during my stay in the country.

In the centre of the compound was a great open-air tank, full of water, where the men bathed and swam; water was running through it continually, but it was by no means in a clean or sanitary condition, owing to the habits of the negroes, who, with all their virtues, remained still uncivilized in their ways.

The men received good wages, varying according to occupation, and so far the mines had experienced no shortage of labour. They have to sign on for three months at least, during which time they must not leave the compound. The conditions were evidently not irksome, nor could any hardship attach to them, for, after once working in the mines, the same men returned over and over again.

I have said we saw them hugely enjoying themselves, performing some of those weird dances so dear to the black

man. They were entering with zest into these amusements, and it was great fun to watch the surprising energy and vigour with which they twisted and twirled about in the strangest of convolutions, to the beating of tom-toms and the chanting, and clapping of hands, of their companions.

During the afternoon our ladies were entertained by the local branch of the Loyal Women's Guild, and in the evening Professor Porter lectured at the Town Hall on *The Bearing of Engineering on Mining*.

At every town we visited, the clubs had made us honorary members, and the Kimberley Club had done the same. It was a large comfortable building on one of the main streets, and I was glad to spend my evening quietly there after the very tiring events of the day.

Hearing next morning that the mail had arrived and that the English papers were at the club, I went there immediately after breakfast to read the home news; which although three weeks old was full of interest after our long absence.

Afterwards I walked across to the De Beers office, where their stock of diamonds was on show for our inspection, and entering the room where they were displayed, I had the pleasure of noticing that the door was locked behind me. I was in temporary imprisonment, but in good company, however, for both Professor Darwin and Sir William Crookes were also there, looking at the gems. I never before saw so much wealth in such a portable form, and in such a small space.

A railing prevented us from going right up to the tables where the stones were lying, but some were invited to step inside this barrier. We were also permitted to handle

any stones we wished to inspect closely. I saw and handled the cone of steel with the diamond which had been forced into it on the occasion of Sir William Crookes' lecture. There it was right enough, deeply imbedded in the hard steel, and level with its surface; and it was wonderful to think how I had seen it forced into the metal. I also handled the magnificent case of diamonds, which had been exhibited at the lecture, and which contained some very choice specimens of cut stones, dazzling and lustrous. Among them were a pair each of pink and green diamonds, the former being of a very delicate rosy colour, and on account of their rarity exceedingly valuable, while both they and the green were wonderfully beautiful.

Several of our party went about Kimberley, during the morning, looking at the relics of the siege. Chief among the sights was the fine monument called 'The Honoured Dead Memorial.' This stood on a height at the top of Memorial Road, and was a structure designed somewhat after the style of the famous Nereid monument discovered at Xanthos in Lycia in 1840. It was built of Rhodesian stone and looked massive and imposing. By it stood Long Cecil, the famous gun, made by the defenders during the siege in the short space of twenty-four days. It could throw a 28 lb. projectile a distance of five miles, and in all it fired 255 shots and proved most useful in keeping down the fire of the Boer 100-pounder, mounted on the tailings' heaps at Kamfersdam Mine, which had been a source of great annoyance and danger to the town.

The siege of Kimberley lasted 124 days, and the relief came only in the nick of time, for the supplies of bare necessaries for a population of 45,000 had run dangerously

low. Horse-flesh was the only meat obtainable and the people were almost starving. The infantile mortality had risen alarmingly; it was reckoned that one out of every two babes born during the siege, died for want of sufficient nourishment. The death rate of coloured infants, reckoned by itself, was even more appalling still, being no less than 935 per thousand.

CHAPTER XVI

BULAWAYO

We joined our train at the station soon after lunch, and amid a scene of great excitement started on our long journey to Bulawayo. Some lovely pineapples were on sale in the town and we had laid in a plentiful supply of these, at the reasonable rate of sixpence each.

After leaving Kimberley, the country was flat and uninteresting in the extreme, and it seemed, if possible, to grow more desolate as we progressed. The life on the train came back as familiarly as ever, among our old companions; but it was with great regret that I learned from Sir B—— L—— that his wife had been left behind on account of her health. She had been troubled with her heart, probably the great toil of our long journey had proved too much for her, so the doctors forbade the still more trying trip to the Victoria Falls, and she remained under attention at Kimberley. Her illness, however, was not considered serious enough to keep Sir B—— from going on with the party; it would have been a pity if he had missed doing so, and Lady L—— would have been the last to have wished it.

As night drew on the dreariness of the country seemed to increase. The moon was past its first quarter, and its light gave a desolate whiteness to the withered veldt. Vryburg was reached at nine, but we did not stay long.

I had wished for a glimpse of Mafeking, but was fast asleep when the train reached there at three in the morning, and so missed it. It was as well perhaps, for I was told that little could be seen by night. Several members of our party who had trekked across from Pretoria were waiting at the station to rejoin the trains.

When morning came the scenery was more varied and interesting than that of the previous day, and of an altogether different type. Great, isolated, stony kopjes, rising sharply out of the ground, were scattered about at intervals, and on these, and on the level country as far as the eye could see, was the typical South African forest of dried-up and rather scattered trees and shrubs. There was but little tangle of undergrowth, and no sign of anything at all like tropical vegetation, only a sort of long, coarse, dried-up grass everywhere among the trees. Neither on trees nor on bushes had much sign appeared as yet of the new growth of the advancing spring.

The kopjes disappeared after a time and the country was again as flat as ever; but still covered with the thin forest growth, and everything looked dry and parched up. At intervals we passed numbers of Kaffir kraals, and occasionally small native clearings could be seen and irregular patches of ground, where the withered remains of last season's mealies' crops still stood untidy and forlorn. The heat and dust soon became very trying—the thermometer in the shade on the platform outside the carriage registering 96°. We all put on our thinnest clothing, and those who had dust coats were glad to cover themselves up in them. It was necessary to be on the platform outside the carriages all day long, if we wished to keep in any way cool. Fortunately there was not the slightest dampness in the heat, or it must have tried us more than it did, and

after sunset the air quickly cooled down and became quite bearable.

When we reached Mochudi, we saw ostriches walking with slow and stately gait beside the trains and peeping in at the windows, which were about on a level with their heads. We fed the birds with cake, biscuits and other dainties, while our photographers followed them about with cameras trying to get good snapshots, with varying success.

By three in the afternoon we reached Palapye and stayed there half-an-hour, making purchases from the natives. There and all through this part of the country those that we saw near the railway mostly dressed like Europeans, a style of costume which, as it was generally rather ill-fitting or ragged, did not suit them at all. I saw, in the pretty little garden attached to the station, young green peas and other spring vegetables just coming up and looking delightfully green and fresh, but the owner told me that these results could be obtained only by constant irrigation, until such time as the rainy season began.

Just before sunset we reached the Bechuanaland border, and at the station our philatelists made a rush for the post office on the platform. There was so little time to spare that I am afraid their manners were rather rough, and the poor postmistress was so overwhelmed that she could neither serve nor remonstrate. Buyers literally helped themselves, and it is to be hoped that no mistakes were made against her in the payments.

We were now in Khama's country, about twenty miles from his kraal. He was far from well, or he might have been present to welcome us on our arrival. He has done so much for his people, especially in his persistent warfare

against strong drink, that he must be considered one of the most far-sighted and loyal of the native African chieftains under our protection. It is reported of him that he once said, 'I fear Lobengula less than I fear brandy. I fought Lobengula and drove him back. He never gave me a sleepless night, but to fight drink is to fight demons and not men. I fear the white men's drink more than the assegais of the Matabele, which kill men's bodies. Drink puts devils into men and destroys their souls and bodies.' We cannot too much honour a native African chief who could utter such words as these; they show strong character, far-sighted wisdom, and real Christianity; and his work among the Bagamwatos to keep from them the curse of strong drink, has borne good fruit.

We were up early next morning, and soon after breakfast our train drew to a standstill at Bulawayo station. The town itself was more than half-a-mile away and could not be seen as we alighted on the platform; but its direction could be guessed from the many vehicles driving to and fro amid clouds of dust. The appearance of the place was not at first sight prepossessing. Everywhere the country looked like the same open veldt, which we had found so monotonous round Kimberley, although indeed scarcely so flat as at the diamond centre. We were on somewhat higher ground than the surrounding country, and could see for miles on all sides, and there was the same typical levelness everywhere.

Many of the reception committee were at the station to welcome us, and those members of our party who had been provided with hosts, or accommodation at the hotels, were soon in carriages and on their way thither. We who had to sleep on the trains, during our stay at Bulawayo, were left to shift for ourselves, and having no luggage

to bother about we made up a party and started on foot to the town.

For some distance the road was only a sandy track, which led into fine wide avenues by which the town was divided up into large squares. These were again subdivided into blocks and stands, and houses had been built upon some of them, but very many were vacant, even in the centre of the business parts. The whole place had a painfully modern appearance, and looked like a town of arrested development. And yet it was quite wonderful to think how much had really been done since its start scarcely ten years ago. Some very fine buildings had been put up here and there, but they seemed rather out of place with so little business doing in them. Cheap galvanized iron erections would have been more in harmony with the surroundings.

In one of the chief thoroughfares, close to the Grand Hotel and the Bulawayo Club, we saw a great granite pedestal on which was a fine figure of Cecil Rhodes standing in a very life-like attitude. It had been put up the previous year and was the work of Mr. John Tweed. Close by was our reception room, whither we proceeded in order to inquire for letters and get our tickets for the meetings and other functions.

S—— and I then started out to look up the offices of some of the companies in which we were interested, and found a little difficulty in lighting upon them, for the names of streets and houses seemed conspicuous by their absence. We came across the Mashonaland Agency buildings eventually, a fine large block worthy of more business than seemed likely to be done in it for some time to come.

Inquiring the whereabouts of the Bechuanaland Exploration Company, we got into conversation with a resident

CECIL RHODES' STATUE, BULAWAYO

whom we saw standing by his front door, and he proved to be an interesting informant, and told us many things about the place. He also invited us to return to his house when we had done our business and he would take us round to his club for a further chat. This we promised to do, and walking across to the Bechuanaland office, which was close by, we were fortunate in finding Mr. Moffat, the manager, in his room. There we chatted for some time and found him sanguine about the prospects of his company, which has large interests in the extensive copper district lately discovered in Northern Rhodesia. Concerning things in Rhodesia generally he said they were not in a flourishing condition, and this was confirmed wherever we went.

He gave us a cordial invitation to lunch with him at the Bulawayo Club, which we promised to do, and leaving him for a time, we returned to our friend opposite, and together we went on to his club for a short time. He echoed what every one else had told us about the bad times in Bulawayo and the country generally. No one seemed to have any money to spend and yet everything was frightfully dear. He instanced the excessive price of all buildings, owing to the high rate of labour and the dearness of materials. Skilled labour cost 30*s*. per day, and yet even at this rate the workmen were unable to save much, owing to the great expense of living. Fortunately native labour was fairly cheap, so that reckoning skilled and unskilled together the two did not average as much as we at first thought. He said that everybody who could afford to leave the place had gone, there being no inducement to keep them there when business was so bad. Only those remained whose occupations, or other ties, or whose lack of means, prevented them from going.

Perhaps his picture was rather too pessimistic, but every one I spoke to in the shops and elsewhere confirmed the fact of business being very bad, although many thought that bottom had now been reached, and that, as things could not get worse, they must improve.

Our friend's club was the business one of Bulawayo, and we were sorry to find that even in Central Africa class distinctions prevailed, the official element of the place and the business-folk being scarcely on the most cordial terms together. It was a fine club, with good reading and billiard-rooms, but it was experiencing the effects of the prevailing depression in a large diminution of its membership.

Later on we walked across to the new museum, which was opened that morning by Professor Darwin. The ceremony was just over when we arrived there, and we found the building crowded with visitors. It contained many interesting exhibits relating to Rhodesia, and among other things, a large collection of pottery and relics from the ancient ruins of Zimbabwe, Khami, Umtali and elsewhere. When we visited Umtali later on, I was able to pick up, in the ruins there, shreds of similar pottery. The museum also contained a fine assortment of native ornaments of Matabele, Mashona, Kalanga and Batonga work. Our geologists were gratified by carefully arranged cases of specimens of the rocks of the country; and our zoologists and ornithologists found much to interest them in its collection of animals and birds.

S—— and I remained in the museum until one o'clock and then joined Mr. Moffat at the Bulawayo Club. He is the grandson of Dr. Moffat, the African missionary, the father-in-law of David Livingstone. He introduced us to two of his friends, Dr. James, and 'Matabele' Wilson,

the latter so-called because of his friendship with the late Lobengula, among whose people he had spent many years of his life. We five lunched together, and found the dining-room crowded with members of the British Association and their numerous friends. For the first and only time in Rhodesia, we had punkahs working during the meal, and felt that they were needed. 'Matabele' Wilson talked much about the country as he knew it in his early days, and we were exceedingly interested in his graphic description of its condition under the rule of the warlike but sagacious Lobengula.

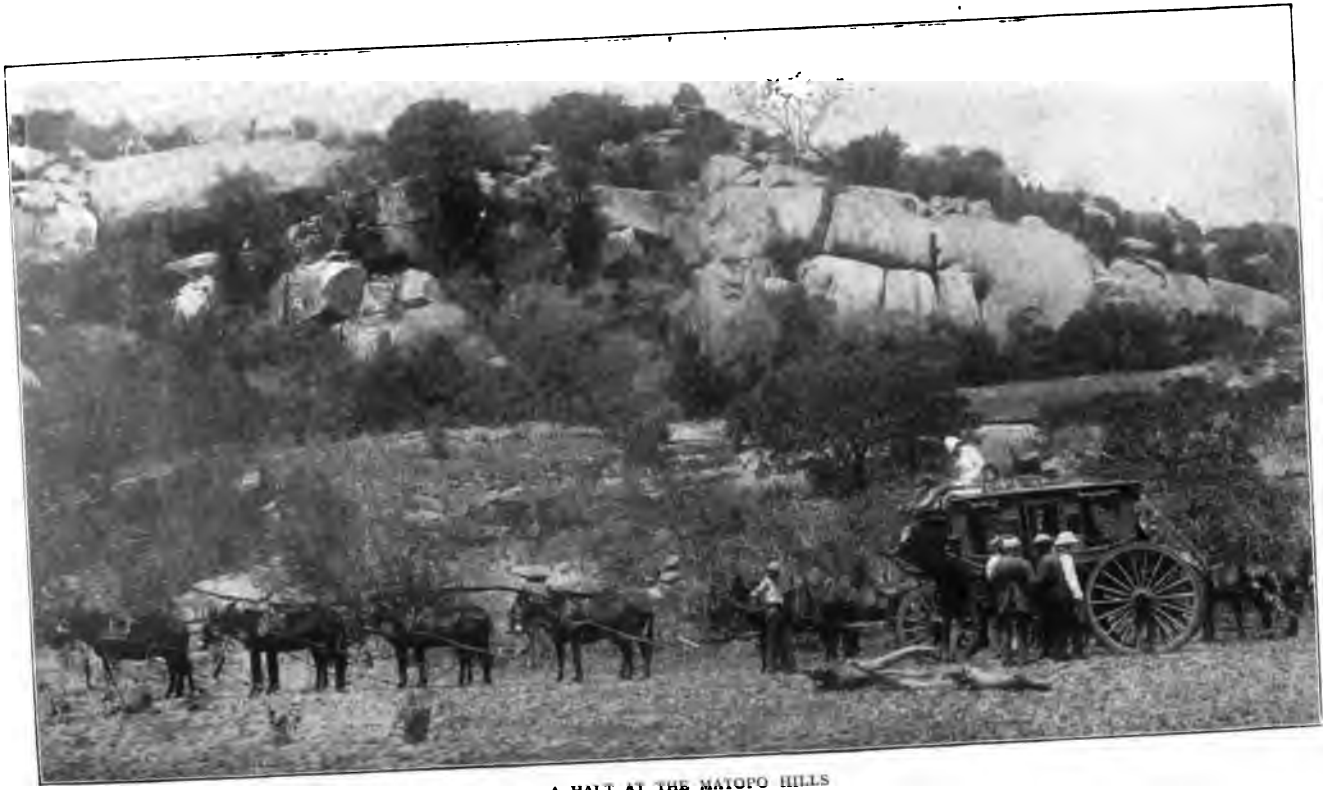
We were all invited by Mr. Newton to a garden-party at Government House during the afternoon, and carriages were waiting, when we finished lunch, to take us there. The house was situated about three and a half miles from the town and was approached by an avenue about three miles long, planted under the direction of Cecil Rhodes. The house itself was built by Rhodes and presented by him to the Government. It stood on the site of Lobengula's kraal, and the old native town of Bulawayo. Near the house was still preserved the 'Indaba' tree, under which the dusky monarch used to sit and dispense justice. The day was exceedingly hot and dusty, and feeling a headache coming on, I decided not to go, but stayed in the reading-room of the club all the afternoon and read, and also tried to sleep.

At six o'clock I walked back to the train, and dressed for the evening's lecture by Mr. D. Randall-McIver, which was to be given in the large hall of the Grand Hotel, upon the subject of *The Rhodesian Ruins*. The band of the South Rhodesian Volunteers played opposite the hotel after dinner, and at the same time the Mayor held a reception in the drawing-room of the hotel. At nine

o'clock the lecture began, and the large hall was full to overflowing. Once again there were complaints about the invidious distinction made between 'official' and 'unofficial' members, the latter being placed so far back that many could not see or hear at all, and went away in disgust.

The lecturer illustrated his remarks with a number of lantern slides. He traced the formations of the various ruins, showing how they seemed to be a line of forts from the mines right away to the coast. He explained their nature and construction, and said he had come to the conclusion that they could not properly be called ancient at all; they were merely mediæval, although evidently not the work of any tribe now living in South Africa. They were unfortunately absolutely free from inscriptions of any sort as a guide to their age or origin. Probably the race that built them was now extinct, having perished in some unlucky tribal wars.

I could not stay until the close of the lecture. It was already very late, and we were due to leave next morning by two special trains at half-past seven and eight o'clock for our excursion to the Matopo Hills, to see the site of Cecil Rhodes' grave at the 'World's View.' My head was aching badly, so I left, and walked quietly back to the train, where I was soon in bed, and had a good night's rest.



A HALT AT THE MATOPO HILLS

CHAPTER XVII

THE MATOPO HILLS

NEARLY two hours' journey through flat but open country, brought us to the rail-head, not far from which was the Matopos Hotel, where we breakfasted.

Their accommodation was limited, but as they had known for weeks beforehand of our coming, there need have been no lack of waiters or provisions; but both were conspicuous by their absence. The service practically resolved itself into 'help yourselves,' and the kitchen was assailed by crowds of eager applicants. I doubt whether anybody succeeded after all in making much of a breakfast. With a little foresight we all might have done well, for although the rooms were limited in size, there was an ample verandah round the house and large grounds beyond, capable of seating any number of persons.

We were none of us, however, in the humour for grumbling, but were out to enjoy ourselves, so as soon as we had finished we selected our seats in the motley collection of vehicles, consisting of a few brakes, some Cape carts, and several antiquated, top-heavy stage-coaches, that had come down from primeval days. They were all drawn by teams of six or eight mules apiece.

Soon after starting we came into a country dotted over with those strange, abrupt, stony kopjes, which form so marked a feature of South African scenery. These grew

more numerous and connected as we went on, until we were shut in by long ranges of them on all sides. The country was fairly well wooded, but the road, which was in parts little better than a sand track, was primitive and very dusty.

The forest was of the usual Rhodesian type, consisting of small scrubby bushes, trees destitute of foliage, and much long, coarse, dried-up grass, which was as tall as the jet-black negroes we now and then saw walking through it. Here and there, on some mimosa or other bush, the young green of the early spring was just beginning to break, but for the most part, except when we came near to any water, everything wore the usual burnt-up appearance.

The hills began to assume peculiar aspects; formed as they were of loosely aggregated boulders and disjointed granite masses, huge and grotesque, piled upon one another in the weirdest manner, as though by giants in sport. Many might almost be called mountains and were crowned on their summits by enormous rocks, standing alone, or sometimes by several, one on the other, perched in what looked like impossible places, and threatening to roll down and crush us. But I suppose they have stood thus for centuries, and will probably remain as they are for centuries still. Many of these great rocks were split in two by the action of the weather, and the two halves seemed about to fall apart. Altogether the effect was most uncanny.

We came to the great reserve where large numbers of wild animals were kept in their native conditions, lest they should become extinct before the advance of civilization. There we saw giraffes feeding, stretching their long necks to find the young shoots just appearing on the

tops of the bushes; also zebras, gnus and other kinds of strange beasts.

We entered the Matopos park, an enclosure of enormous extent, for we drove a long distance before passing the gates on the further side. The scenery was, if possible, wilder inside than outside the enclosure, and the place abounded with game of various sorts, hiding away in the caves and crannies of the great hills, and amid the thick undergrowth on all sides.

Our way wound in and out among these hills, and through the primeval forest, until at length we reached the foot of the historic mountain, upon the summit of which lay the body of Rhodesia's founder. There we left the carriages, the mules were outspanned, and we soon saw them kicking their heels high in the air and rolling over and over in their enjoyment. The hill, which was of granite formation, was, I should guess, considerably over 500 ft. high, and at its foot we saw a notice upon a board nailed to a tree, 'This is consecrated ground.' The presence of the dead consecrates any ground, I thought, as I read it.

Before ascending, S—— managed to gather off an almost inaccessible tree a pod full of the beautiful scarlet and black mahogany beans; but it was impossible to reach the many others we saw hanging higher up. Then a stiff climb in the blazing hot sun, brought us to the summit, where we found the air much cooler and fresher than in the valley.

From the top a most magnificent sight met our gaze. On all sides, as far as the eye could see, we were looking upon mountains and hills of the wildest and most fantastic forms. Some were like immense castellated towers; others might have been grotesque representations of the fearful animals that, in the far away Jurassic period,

dragged their uncouth forms through the African swamps; hideous dinosaurs turned by some magician into stone to keep guard and watch over these wild fastnesses. Many of the outlines had taken to themselves strangely human shapes.

Surrounded by these awe-inspiring marvels of nature; amid scenes which, when the pale moon shines clear and full upon them, must resemble nothing so much as her own rugged, airless and lifeless mountains; in a grave blasted out of the solid granite, lay all that remained on earth of that form which was once the man who thought in continents, and who gave his name to this great country. A simple granite slab covered the tomb, and on it we read: 'Here lies the body of Cecil John Rhodes'—nothing more, and yet surely all that needed to be said. At the corners of the grave stood enormous boulders, forming a rough and natural enclosure about it.

Our friend the Rev. J. O. B—— had announced the day before that he would hold a service by the grave and give a short address. But such a spot was a sermon in itself, and preached far beyond the power of man to surpass; so he could only say these words, 'I had prepared a short address, but in these surroundings I think the most fitting sermon is—silence.' I could not help recalling the fine lines of Wordsworth—

> 'What soul was his, when on the tops
> Of the high mountains he beheld the sun
> Rise up and bathe the world in light!
> . . . . . .
> No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request;
> Rapt into still communion that transcends
> The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,
> His mind was a thanksgiving to the power
> That made him; it was blessedness and love!'

Not far from Rhodes' grave and on the same hill stood

the Shangani Memorial with its fine bronzes, in memory of the brave little band, who, with Major Alan Wilson, were slain to the last man by the Matabele, on the banks of the Shangani River. The monument was of granite hewn from the base of the hill, and was a piece of excellent workmanship; but one felt it was rather out of place there, and hardly in such fine keeping with its surroundings as the unpretentious, rough hewn, simple grave of the founder of Rhodesia.

As we stood on the summit we had a magnificent view of the valleys that lay below. There was an especially large one lying almost at the base of the hill, and covered in places with the virgin forest, where numbers of natives could be seen moving about. It was an ideal spot for an encampment, easily protected, difficult of assault and full of surprises to an unwary foe.

It was there that Rhodes, unarmed and alone, save for one companion, came during the Matabele war to trust himself to the honour of the savages while he discussed their grievances with them: when by undertaking personally to see to their remedy, he was the means of putting a stop to a ruthless and cruel struggle. The natives afterwards held him in great awe and respect, and though his grave lies unprotected in the very midst of their strongholds, it is quite safe among them, and they guard it with care and reverence.

This romantic spot is called the 'World's View,' a very appropriate name, as it seemed to us. I took a few photographs, which, however, did not turn out well; and lingered as long as I could, for I felt loth to leave such an enchanting place. When I did make the descent again, I was met at the bottom by one of our Bulawayo friends, who led me to where luncheon was set out in an open tent. This

had been erected in a most romantic and primitively wild spot, under the shelter of huge, overhanging rocks, and in the picturesque valley I had seen from the summit of the hill.

The luncheon was acceptable, especially the tea and drinks, for the day was extremely hot and the ride had been dusty. I am afraid to say how many oranges we ate, or cups of tea we drank; for a glorious hour or so we simply luxuriated in drinking. On the ground, under the trees, in the nooks and crannies of the rocks, and wherever there was shelter from the sun to be had, we sat about eating and drinking and enjoying ourselves. In the hot, arid atmosphere, bread and cakes soon became dry and unpalatable after a short exposure, and meats were almost unthinkable, but jellies, fruits and drinks were always appetizing, and for these we were insatiable.

People who have never been to these dry, semi-tropical countries can hardly form any idea of the intense longing for something to drink that afflicts those who visit them for the first time. This craving is felt most when one newly arrives; but fortunately it wears off somewhat after a time. It is an exceedingly risky proceeding for the newcomer to indulge too much in alcoholic beverages; for the great desire to drink, if met in this way, may stimulate a craving too imperious to be resisted.

Numbers of Matabele were hanging around on the fringe of our party, curiously watching the scene. They had never seen so many white people at one time in these hills, except on the sad occasion when Cecil Rhodes was buried. From some of them we purchased curios, such as knobkerries, wire-covered sticks, whips, bead necklets, or whatever they had that took our fancy. Their knowledge of English was very limited, confined generally

to saying the name of the coin they wanted for the article in barter. They were as black as coal, and were dressed in shirts or coats covering the body but leaving the legs bare. This attire was nothing like so showy as that of the Zulus; there was a marked absence of the feathers, skins and ornaments which made the latter race so picturesque.

S—— disappeared for a while, and later on I found that he and a few others had heard of some Bushmen's drawings to be seen in a cave a little distance away, to which they had gone. They saw what there was to be seen; but did not seem to be much impressed, the sketches being very poor and indistinct.

We rested for an hour or two in this delightful valley, of the beauty and primitive wildness of which I regret that no words of mine can convey a true impression to the reader. It was the sort of place to be visited again and again and explored at leisure, little by little; but alone, or with one or two congenial minds only, and not with a crowd.

As we made our way back to our conveyances, we felt that very few of us would ever have another opportunity of revisiting these scenes, hidden away in the heart of the dark continent so many thousands of miles from our homes.

Some of our more enterprising geologists had already started off to walk back to the railhead, and I have always regretted that I could not summon up energy enough to accompany them; but I felt the afternoon heat really too enervating for such exertion. Seven miles of tramping in the hot tropical sunshine, along a soft sandy track, or over rough forest ground, was not lightly to be undertaken. I looked at the walkers toiling ahead in the heat and the

glare; I felt the almost overhead sun blazing down through my panama hat; I saw the coaches waiting with their harnessed teams; and behind their sun-curtains their interiors looked so cool and inviting that I hesitated, and was lost. I took my seat with the rest and was driven back the way we had come, a journey far hotter and dustier than the morning's had been.

Nearly all the way along we saw clouds of locusts flying in every direction, and their transparent wings gave them something of the appearance of great snow-flakes whirling through the air. In size they were about twice as large as dragon-flies, and they were ready to devour every green thing as soon as it appeared; for so voracious are their appetites that, when a cloud of them descends upon a farm, the owner need have no further anxiety about his crops, for none will be left to worry over.

Our party straggled very much, a mile or two separating the first from the last conveyance. We were well ahead, and only half-a-mile from the railway, when one of our mules gave out suddenly. It had sunstroke, or staggers, or heat apoplexy; I was not learned in horses and could not tell which, and our negroes spoke no English and could give us no information. It had to be unharnessed and led to the shelter of a great rock, where it immediately fell down and would not be moved, for it was evidently very bad. If the drivers only looked at it, it set up a piteous remonstrance, most heartrending to hear. There was no help for it but to take out its fellow, and tether him alongside his sick companion, while we shortened our harness and proceeded with four mules only.

This delayed us a long time, and while we were busy the rest of our party passed, leaving us far in the rear. The result of all this was that I lost my camera: for as we

reached the railway the train was just whistling to start; we rushed to it and got aboard only in the nick of time, and it was well under weigh when I remembered that in the hurry and excitement I had left my camera in the trap.

We were already a quarter of a mile off and going very slowly; and hearing that a second train was to follow on with the stragglers of our party and the walkers, whom I had forgotten, I jumped out and made my way back to the brake, which had been drawn up with the other vehicles some distance from where we alighted. I searched everywhere, but no camera was to be seen; the drivers had both disappeared and no one understood what I wanted.

I could do nothing but take the second train back to Bulawayo, informing the officials of my loss at both ends of the line. The general opinion was that our negro drivers had taken it and that it was bound to turn up in time. It could be of no possible use to them and they would be sure to try and dispose of it later on. It turned out eventually that this was an unjust suspicion, for the drivers had never seen the camera.

The loss was exceedingly vexing, for I had brought it with me chiefly to take views at the Victoria Falls, and just before reaching this climax of our long journey I must needs go and lose it.

On arrival at Bulawayo I went to the club to spend the evening reading and writing, and meeting Dr. James there, I chatted with him for a while. He afterwards introduced me to Mr. Marshall Hole, the manager of the Chartered Company, to whom I had brought a letter of introduction from the Board in London; and we sat and talked about Rhodesian affairs for some time. He seemed to be more optimistic than many I had spoken with, and

looked forward to a speedy end to the present depression in the country. He told me that quite a number of small private mining ventures, working with five or ten stamp batteries, were paying their owners well. He was confident that the newly-discovered gold reefs were of true banket formation and likely to turn out successfully. His optimism may have been partly due to his official position in the Chartered Company, but it was cheering to hear some one talk hopefully of Rhodesian prospects in the near future.

He was vexed to hear about my camera, and promised to put the Chartered Police on its track, and was sure I should soon get it again. If a negro had it I was bound to recover it eventually; but it was very disappointing to lose it just before reaching the Falls.

We left Bulawayo early on the following morning for the north, *en route* for the Victoria Falls. The weather was hot and dry, and all day long we were passing through the familiar Rhodesian forest scenery. This grew denser and wilder as we progressed, with much more of the long dry grass and thick undergrowth among the trees.

Occasionally we came across great open spaces, where forest fires had cleared the ground; and during the day we saw many of these conflagrations on a small scale, where sparks from the trains in front of us had set alight the grass growing by the side of the track. It was a marvel that impassable fires did not rage, considering the tinder-like appearance of everything about us; had there been any wind to fan the flames the conflagrations might have been serious.

We stopped at intervals for the engines to take water, and then we usually left the trains and roamed about in the woods, picking wildflowers, chasing butterflies, or hunt-

ing up native kraals. Many stations were passed with most unpronounceable names, such as Nyamandhlovu, Gwaai, Intundhla and Inyantue. At one of these places a lamentable accident occurred. The dog belonging to a station official was reposing under the train as we started off. No one saw the animal, until a piteous howl revealed its presence, and we saw the wretched creature drag itself from among the wheels, with its two hind legs cut off. As we left, the station-master was rushing for his gun to put the poor wretch out of its misery.

Later on, at midnight, we reached Wankie station, in the centre of the coal-bearing area; but this must be described on our return journey, for we saw nothing of it as we passed up country. We knew the trains were to reach the Victoria Falls very early the next morning, and that a tiring day was before us, so all had gone to bed betimes.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE VICTORIA FALLS

AT five o'clock on Tuesday morning, September 12, the train came to a standstill at the Falls Station, and the cessation of movement woke me up. I knew, without asking, where we were, for the distant roar of the falling waters could be distinctly heard.

Hastily dressing, I left the train as soon as possible, and found that it was just daybreak and we were standing on a siding of the railway, in the midst of the same kind of burnt-up forest as that we had travelled through on the previous day.

The hotel was situated a short distance off, and thither I bent my steps. From thence the ground, in the direction of the Falls, dropped somewhat, so that a very magnificent view could be obtained over the forest-covered country lying in that direction. Right in front, only a few hundred feet off, was the mighty gorge of the Zambesi, and further on, less than a mile away, I saw the new railway bridge across the river. I went some distance beyond the hotel to lower ground to get a better view of the gorge and the bridge.

The Falls themselves were not in sight from this position, but the several great columns of mist, which always overhang them, could be distinctly seen above the trees, clearly marking their whereabouts. It is from these mist

THE ZAMBESI RIVER ABOVE THE FALLS, SHOWING THE MIST CLOUDS OVERHANGING THE GORGE

columns that the native name 'Mosi-oa-tunya' is obtained. It signifies 'the smoke that sounds,' and is a very appropriate appellation, for when seen from a distance these columns of spray bear an extraordinary resemblance to the smoke of a veldt fire, and the roar of the waters can be heard for many miles round.

Sometimes, when the Zambesi is in flood, the columns rise to a height of a thousand feet and can be seen fifty miles off. The natives say in their songs, 'How should any one lose his way with such a landmark to guide him?'

These Falls, perhaps one of the most wonderful sights in the whole world, were discovered by David Livingstone in November 1855, almost fifty years within a month to the time of our visit. As far as is known, he was the first white man to set eyes on them, certainly the first who ever returned to tell of their existence. So inaccessible has this district been until quite recently, and so unknown was all the surrounding country, that before 1875 it is probable that fewer than twenty-five white people had even seen this most entrancing of nature's marvels.

We had no time to go to the bridge before breakfast, which was ready for us at the hotel. Early as it was, the day was too hot for eating with any appetite; our chief desire seemed to be for drink. I do not think that either the food or the waiting could be called good; but the size of our party must have been a great tax upon the resources of an hotel, so many hundreds of miles from its nearest base of supply.

After breakfast, S—— and I walked to the bridge to inspect it before the formal opening. We were glad we decided to do this, for we found some interesting Kaffir huts on the way, and secured a few curios in them. The

natives were very friendly and willing to sell us anything they had; but as they could not speak English, our bargaining had to be done by signs. However, they all seemed to know the value of money, and some could just say such words as 'ticky, sixpence, shilling, two shilling,' and so on.

At the bridge, we had half-an-hour to spare before the time of the opening ceremony. The structure was still in an uncompleted state, and in places, where the floor had not been quite boarded over, it was necessary to walk with care to avoid tumbling through.

The bridge is the highest in the world, being 350 ft. from the level of the rails to the level of the water (*i.e.* at low water, as we saw it). Perhaps this height can be better appreciated when I mention that St. Paul's Cathedral might stand beneath its great arch. It was approached on either side through a shallow cutting, and had a total length of 650 ft.; the arch alone having a span of 500 ft.

The iron work was all made in England by the Cleveland Bridge and Engineering Company of Darlington, and the actual erection took only nineteen weeks. The riveting, however, was a much longer affair; but the whole structure was completed fortunately with very little loss of life, considering the hazardous nature of the work, only one European and one native being killed during its construction. It was commenced at each end, and gradually built outwards until the two parts met, and joined in the centre. So perfectly had the measurements been made, that when the junction was effected, the booms and braces on either side met and joined exactly.

The bridge was the design of the firm of Sir Douglas Fox, and the construction was superintended by Sir Charles Metcalfe, whom we now saw on the bridge, await-

ing the arrival of the train which was to bring Professor Darwin and our party for the formal opening.

There were a few other members of the 'British Association' on the bridge taking photographs; or, like ourselves, enjoying the beautiful view of the gorge, which was unique from this position.

The scenery certainly was wonderfully fine, especially to our left, where one end of the Falls could be seen, and where the gorge made a sudden bend into sight at a spot called the 'Boiling Pot.' Over this part only a few small streams were tumbling, but an official informed us that in the wet season the mist was so dense there, owing to the mass of falling water, that little else could be seen. In this respect we were fortunate in the time of our visit, for although we failed to see the great volume of water of the wet season, we could get much better and clearer views of the surrounding scenery owing to the absence of mist.

To our right was the long deep gorge, winding away towards the hotel in the distance, while below us we saw a strangely small amount of water rushing under the bridge. When it was remembered that the whole of the Zambesi, a mile wide, poured over into this gorge, one wondered where all the water had gone. Was there some cleft in the earth where it was lost in a subterranean channel, or was this narrow stream, tearing under the bridge, deeper than it appeared? Certainly we were far from impressed with the volume of water flowing there. We learned, however, that in the wet season it rose fifty feet higher in the gorge than it was, when we saw it after six months of rainless weather.

Officers now placed a cable across the centre of the bridge and this was to be fused by an electric spark, when

Professor Darwin touching a button declared the structure open. We could see the train in the distance approaching, the engine gaily decorated with flags and greenery.

One of our officials was busily giving orders that all who had not violet tickets were to be told to go off the bridge; these violet tickets being the free ones given to the members of the 'official' party, while those of the 'unofficial' section who had paid for theirs had red ones. Most of the Rhodesian officers, however, declined to carry out these instructions, and we were left undisturbed. This attempt to turn us off the bridge was a piece of official interference, which was greatly resented and caused much heartburning.

When the train came slowly to a standstill in the centre of the bridge, the passengers alighted and formed a large group about the President, who made a short speech.

He said that it was a most fortunate coincidence that this great enterprise had been brought to the stage at which it was proper to declare the bridge open, during the visit of the 'British Association' to South Africa. Thanks to the generosity and care of the Government Railways, they had just performed an astonishing journey of 1,700 miles in comfort and luxury. It was almost an impertinence that they should come in electrically-lighted sleeping-cars to a place which heroic explorers had spent many months in fruitless endeavours to reach. This was a thing which impressed itself on the imagination; and another thing which appealed to them as Englishmen was, that they were still under the Union Jack. It seemed nothing short of a fairy tale to stand on this bridge over the Zambesi. It was due to the influence of steam that this great enterprise had become possible. He could not refrain from quoting the remarkable forecast written by his great-great-grandfather, Erasmus Darwin, in 1785.

> 'Soon shall thy arm, unconquered steam, afar
> Urge the slow barge, and draw the flying car.'

How little could the writer of these lines have foreseen that his great-great-grandson would have the honour of declaring a railway bridge open, in the heart of Equatorial Africa?

THE RAILWAY BRIDGE, VICTORIA FALLS

This act Professor Darwin then performed by touching a button, which fused the cord stretched across the line, and the train passed over, some of the passengers proceeding in it for the trip to Livingstone Island, while others, forming into another party, went through the Rain Forest.

The forest with this appropriate name was a belt of trees a mile long, which bordered the Falls on the south side, and from which the finest views of the plunging river could be obtained. It was so called by Edward Mohr, who in 1870 was one of the earliest visitors to the spot.

In parts of the forest, rain is always dripping from the trees, owing to the mist rising from the dashing of the waters on the rocks below; while in summer time, when the Zambesi is in flood, visitors have to protect themselves with macintoshes and umbrellas before venturing in, if they do not wish to get drenched. When we saw it, the water in the river was at its lowest, and there was no mist except upon the extreme margin of the forest, where it almost overhung the gorge. We could wander about in comfort and stand at its best coigns of vantage for seeing the falling waters, without getting more than a slight wetting to our feet.

The sweet, cool air of the forest at once struck us as so different from the hot atmosphere which prevailed outside its grateful shade. Vegetation revelled there in luxuriant wildness; great trees crowded upon one another, densely covered with the greenest of foliage; the undergrowth was tangled and in parts impenetrable; huge palms grew on all sides; the ground was carpeted with the loveliest maidenhair ferns; everything seemed to thrive in that perennial dampness.

Across the track, which went by the name of a path, lay fallen giants of the forest, and from their trunks

straight branches, like sons and daughters, rose high up in the air, forming new colonies by themselves of fresh young trees. Troops of monkeys could be seen springing from branch to branch, very shy animals to whom it was difficult to approach closely. Snakes lurked in the dense tangle of undergrowth and amid the decaying trunks and branches of the trees that cumbered the ground. Several of our naturalists captured fine specimens, which they afterwards proudly exhibited preserved in spirit.

At last we were gazing upon real tropical vegetation. What we had seen hitherto were but dried-up caricatures of forests; here only was that profusion of wild growth, green and luxuriant, which our imaginations had always pictured as usual in Equatorial Africa. Heat alone, as we had seen outside, was insufficient to induce nature to clothe herself with beauty; never-failing moisture was also needed, and here it was to be had in abundance. As soon as we passed beyond the limits of the forest, and away from the life-giving mist that overhung it, the green vegetation ceased, the palm-trees disappeared, the ferns vanished, and the country resumed the barren burnt-up aspect so familiar to us.

The Falls are too vast to be seen at one glance; in this respect they are somewhat disappointing as a spectacle. The great river that tumbles into the gorge from the opposite bank is a mile wide, and is split up by various islands and shallows into many separate falls, and these must be seen in succession, as one walks through the Rain Forest. But what is lost by the absence of one immense fall, is gained in many charming and diversified sections, each one showing this wonderful marvel of nature in a different aspect.

We approached the forest towards its eastern end, and

IN THE RAIN FOREST, VICTORIA FALLS

there, before entering beneath its dense shade, we stood awhile upon a ledge of rock, spray-washed and turf-covered, called Buttress Point, where we obtained a magnificent view of one extreme end of the Falls. From this point we could look along the deep gorge into which the river was tumbling, but the dense clouds of mist prevented the vision from penetrating far. Lovely rainbow arches sprang across the mighty chasm, like dainty bridges for the feet of fairies to trip over.

The projecting crag, upon which we stood, seemed to shake and tremble with the shock of the falling cataract, dashing down 357 ft. into the cauldron or Boiling Pot below. The whole of the waters, tumbling over the mile-long line of falls, converged at this spot, and rushed with swirl and roar and foam through the narrow throat of the gorge and on and under the bridge. The impression left upon the mind, as we gazed, was one of overwhelming power. We were quickly wetted by the finest of mists that rose up around us, but regardless of this we lingered and were loth to tear ourselves away.

In England we are accustomed to mists, but they occur only too often in connection with dull grey skies and cold wintry suns, which fail to relieve their monotony; but in this translucent atmosphere, and beneath the fierce rays of the hot tropical sun, there was a softness that turned their greyness to the colour of pearl, and—where the rainbows arched the chasm—exquisite colourings beyond the power of words to describe.

No photographs that we were able to take could reproduce this charm and beauty, for where we saw the daintiest of tints blended with the pearly mist, the prints only showed blurs which wiped out all the delicate details of the pictures; so that those to whom they were afterwards

shown would exclaim, 'What a pity the films have been light struck in these parts!' I have seen one photograph of the Falls on which the rainbow arch was well marked; but when it was sent to an artist to reproduce, he painted this out, thinking it was only a blur on the film, so little did even his trained eye recognize what had actually been the most lovely portion of the picture. Photography, as astronomers know well enough, can show to us things quite beyond the power of the human eye to see by itself; but, in front of this masterpiece of Nature's works, it was powerless to reproduce the soul of the picture; it showed us the skeleton, not the living reality.

From the centre of the Rain Forest, we had some very fine views of the middle, or largest division of the Falls, while, further on, peep after peep was obtained of other sections of the plunging river. Livingstone Island, on the very brink of the chasm, and Boruka Island further along could be seen on the opposite bank, while between them the cataract plunged and foamed.

Towards the western extremity of the forest, we came in sight of a very fine fall called the Cascade, or Leaping Water. Owing to the fact that a better coign of vantage could be had from which to view it, than could be obtained for the other sections, and owing also to the absence of the overhanging mist which partly obscured all the rest, this Cascade must be considered as giving the finest impression of a waterfall yet seen. There the river at the top did not plunge suddenly into the gorge, but rushed down a narrowing and gradually receding cleft between Boruka Island and the western bank, until, when it did plunge over at last, it had a drop of 250 ft. instead of 350 ft.

At this end we passed out of the Rain Forest and from a small steep kloof further along I was able, after clamber-

ing down about a hundred feet, to obtain a very fine view of this end of the gorge and the 'Devil's Pool,' into which the 'Leaping Waters' tumbled, tossed and foamed. So steep was this declivity and so appalling were the foaming waters roaring at its base, into which a slip might easily have plunged me, that it would have been madness to have attempted the descent, had it not been for the trees which thickly covered the slope. By means of these I was able to slip down little by little, until I reached a favourable spot from which to view this end of the gorge.

The glimpse I there obtained was well worth the trouble, for wonderful as were the Falls, to my mind the awful wildness of the mighty gorge—like a veritable inferno from the pages of Dante—far surpassed them in strangeness and grandeur.

Still further on we came out upon the banks of the great Zambesi itself, a quiet river flowing placidly along, oblivious of the fearful chasm into which it would shortly plunge. There many of our members, with turned up trousers and stockingless feet, were wading in the stream, or searching for curious shells and pretty stones among the shallows. I joined them and very much enjoyed the paddling in the warm clear waters.

During the morning I heard news of my camera. A lady who had been with us in that brake as we came from the Matopo Hills had taken charge of it. She had it with her luggage on the train at the Falls Station, so I walked back with her to the hotel a mile or more away. The path was a tiring one, being of deep soft sand heavy to walk through, the sun was blazing fiercely, and it was one of the hottest days I spent in South Africa. After coming from the cooler Rain Forest and the shaded banks of the river, the heat was almost overpowering. But the inconveni-

ences did not end on reaching the hotel; there, indeed, the shade was very pleasant, but I could not stay to enjoy it; if I wanted to get back my camera, I must help the lady to find her luggage. This meant an hour's hard work, and rushing about in the hot sun; for by ill-luck everything had been cleared out of her train and deported no one knew where, in order to use the carriages to make up the train for the morning's opening ceremony on the bridge.

But at length the right package was found and in it was my camera safe enough, and I was very glad to get it in time to take some views before our visit to the Falls ended.

LIVINGSTONE DRIFT ON THE RIVER ZAMBESI

CHAPTER XIX

LIVINGSTONE ISLAND—PALM KLOOF

DURING the afternoon, we who had been through the Rain Forest in the morning, were taken by the train over the bridge again, where we alighted; and a short walk, along the east bank of the Zambesi, brought us to a drift, where boats waited to convey us to Livingstone Island. Those who had done this trip in the morning visited the Rain Forest during the afternoon.

While waiting at the drift, I had a short talk with Mr. F. W. Sykes, the Conservator of the Falls, to whom I bore a letter of introduction. Then in a boat, holding nearly a dozen passengers, and propelled by six natives, we crossed the river to the island. The natives did not sit down to row, but stood and used paddles with long handles, propelling the boat rapidly and smoothly in this way.

Livingstone Island lies in the middle of the river Zambesi, and hangs over the very brink of the Falls. It is often difficult and even dangerous to approach, except during the dry season when the river is low, as it was during our visit.

When we arrived on the island, I photographed our boat and boatmen, and then joined the rest to find out the tree on which Livingstone is said to have cut his initials. We found it, but nothing was to be seen on the tree, only a place where something might have been cut. It

was protected by a wire fence, and a notice-board asked visitors to help in preserving such an interesting relic, stating also the date when Livingstone cut his initials on it.

The following extract from his diary puts beyond doubt the fact that he did cut his initials on some tree on this island. After describing his visit he goes on to say, 'I cut my initials on a tree, and the date 1855. This was the only instance in which I indulged in this piece of vanity.' The identity of the tree was established by Mr. Sykes, who tells us how an old white-haired native, by name Namakabwa, who spent most of his time down the gorge catching fish, on being questioned said he well remembered 'Monari'—Livingstone's native name—coming to the Falls. Namakabwa stated—

'That he made his way over to the island a day or two after Livingstone's departure, and found that a small plot had been cleared of bushes, and some cutting made on a tree. When asked which tree he immediately went to the Name Tree and put his finger on what had evidently been a cut. The bark of the tree was so rough, and the marks so nearly obliterated that one would have some doubts on the subject, were the source of information less worthy of belief.'

The native name of the island was originally 'Kempongo,' which is Makololo for 'Goat Island'; Livingstone changed it to Garden Island; but it now finally and properly bears the world-renowned name of its great discoverer.

We wandered through the dense forest which covered nearly the whole of the island, and came out on to the ledge which overhung the gorge, and there we stood amid the mist to view the marvellous scenery. We were on historic ground, for it was from this spot that Livingstone himself obtained his first glimpse of Mosi-oa-tunya. The view was, indeed, fine, and had it not been for the mist, which blotted out the scene where the falling waters were

greatest, it would have been unparalleled in its grandeur. Four hundred feet below us at the foot of the black, basaltic chasm the mighty river fell thundering on to the rocks, or into the rushing torrent of the gorge which it churned into the whitest of foam.

We leant over as far as we dared, to peer with awe into the gloomy abyss of seething waters. As far as the eye could pierce the thick mist along the gorge, were falls beyond falls. On the opposite side of the chasm was the lovely Rain Forest, through which we had wandered during the morning, for we were now viewing the scene from the northern side, and from the very brink of the chasm itself. We could not stay as long as we should have liked, for we were being rapidly drenched with the mist, and so were obliged to make our way towards drier ground. Some parts of the island must be under water when the river is in flood, and as it was we had to jump across many a tiny torrent or sluggish stream making its way towards the fateful edge.

We could see better from the island how the gorge itself had been probably formed by the wearing away of the river bed, and not, as Livingstone supposed, by some great convulsion which had rent the very crust of the earth asunder in primeval times.

The whole country around is covered with hard, basaltic rock, which in some far-off age was poured as liquid lava down the great Zambesi Valley; there are layers upon layers of this to a depth of many hundreds, probably many thousands, of feet. These lavas in cooling developed a system of joints or cracks, which have constituted planes of weakness, and there the erosive work of the river has been facilitated. This is probably the secret of the gradual wearing away of this magnificent gorge, with its

length of over forty miles and its innumerable windings or zigzags. Hundreds of the small beginnings of these erosive channels could be seen, as we wandered about on the very edge of this romantic and wonderful island.

Above and below the Victoria Falls stone paleolithic implements have been found in profusion in the river gravels; many were picked up and exhibited by members of our party. They have also been found on the highest banks of the Zambesi below the Falls, 400 ft. above the present level of the waters, and resting immediately upon the basaltic platform. In some cases their position was 100 ft. below what is now the level of the land. When these implements were dropped by paleolithic men ages ago, the Zambesi must have flowed a sluggish river, where now the gorge extends for forty long miles; but which had not then been carved out.

Paleoliths have been also discovered in the water-worn gullies of the Rain Forest, probably dropped there when it formed the bed of the ancient river. If the conclusions to which these facts seem to lead up, are confirmed by further investigations, an immense period of time must have passed by, since early man roamed the primeval forests. It is impossible to say how long; but when one thinks of this tremendous gorge, forty miles in length, and in many parts 400 ft. deep, all worn away by the slow erosion of the river-floods, the enormous duration of time implied can be approximately guessed.

Of course we all photographed the Name Tree; and taken in the subdued light of the forest these views turned out fairly well; but when we turned our cameras on the Falls themselves, many were not so successful. Over-exposure was our great fault, for the intensity of the light was much stronger than we allowed for, and also the surroundings

NAME TREE ON LIVINGSTONE ISLAND, VICTORIA FALLS

were so shrouded by mist that perfect pictures were very difficult to get.

After a long stay among these interesting scenes, we returned by boat to the east bank of the river, where tea was supposed to be waiting for us. We were thirsty enough in all conscience, but there was little to drink, for the milk had all gone and there was not much left of anything, so that late comers, of whom I was one, fared badly.

I have already alluded to the way in which food dried up in this hot arid country; the greatest care had to be taken when picnicking, if everything eatable was not to be spoilt. On this occasion the bread became in a few minutes like unbrowned toast; the butter in the dishes turned to oil and had to be put on the bread with spoons; the finest of dust peppered the jam; the cakes grew solid and hard; eating was hardly an epicurean delight, and seemed to add to our thirst. However, it was delightful to rest awhile in the shade of the trees, on the banks of the great Zambesi, whose scenery was so strange and new to us.

On the way back we passed a pretty gully called the 'Palm Kloof,' which had been visited by most of the party earlier in the afternoon, but which a few had not yet seen; so we made up a small party of half-a-dozen to explore it.

The track led down by a series of steep zigzags to the level of the waters in the gorge, passing on the way through a most exquisite forest of palm trees, from which the kloof derived its name. There, beneath the great, green, fan-like leaves, the shade was very deep and the air beautifully cool. It was as though we were walking through a range of enormous conservatories, only the roof, instead of being glass, was the blue vault of heaven. Agile

monkeys scampered about among the branches, rushing off to hide as we approached.

At the bottom of the Kloof, where we reached the level of the foaming waters, we had to clamber over hundreds of great boulders, to a position from which a splendid view could be had of the Boiling Pot. In the wet season, when the river is in flood, the rocks on which we stood would be deep below the surface of the rushing waters. We were almost under the wonderful bridge which spanned the chasm 400 ft. above us, and as we gazed up at it, we could form some idea of its great height. The view, as one looked from this point along the gorge, was exquisite, and there many of our members obtained their finest photographs.

All around us were the black basaltic walls of this channel in the earth. Towards the Boiling Pot they were bare, save where here and there some venturesome fern or plant grew out of a nook or cranny of the water-worn surface. Right opposite to where we stood the cliffs were more broken and varied, for there the forest above overhung the gorge, and pushed itself halfway down to meet the swirling waters below.

I stayed down so long, fascinated by the rush and tumult of the boiling waters, and oblivious of the time, that I found myself at last quite alone. It was late, and the light was fading rapidly, and I had at least half-an-hour's climb before I could regain the top of the Kloof. It was a long, lonely walk through the deepening shades of the dense palm forest, and amid the tangle of bush and undergrowth above it; and I must own to finding it somewhat uncanny. I could not help feeling how absolutely helpless I should have been, had I suddenly encountered one of the savage animals of these parts in such a likely lurking place.

Mr. Sykes had told me during the afternoon how he had shot lions recently, close by the Falls, and I remembered that only two or three months before our visit, a leopard had been killed on the very bridge above me; so although there may have been no danger whatever, I felt more than justified in keeping as sharp a look out as my short sight would permit me, into the dense tangle on either side of the path. It was quite dark long before I reached the top of the Kloof, and I must own to a feeling of relief as I emerged on to the open, and there met three of our friends who also had wandered further afield and were just returning to the hotel.

There was a certain amount of moonlight which enabled us to find our way along the railway track, across the bridge, and so home through the forest.

While we were at dinner, a band of Barotse natives, dressed in khaki uniforms with bright red facings, played to us many martial and familiar airs. They were a smart-looking lot of fellows, all with bare legs and feet, and they held themselves well and looked quite soldier-like in their becoming uniforms. Not one of them had ever learned, or could read a note of music; they picked up the tunes by hearing them first whistled over, and I thought they played with a great deal of spirit, only occasionally with too much noise.

During the evening, a few of the party made a moonlight trip up the Zambesi by boat. Others strolled in the forest close by, enjoying the soft warm air, and the exquisite peeps of unfamiliar scenery. Some sat about on the stoep of the hotel, talking over the events of the day, while many were attracted to the native huts among the trees, near which bonfires were always burning; for we were curious to learn all we could about the habits of the

negroes. It was an ideal evening, calm and peaceful; the rays of the bright African moon touched and softened everything with their silver glory, and transformed the burnt-up landscape into a vision of exquisite beauty.

We were up early next morning and found the usual warm sunny weather that we had learned to associate with Rhodesia. The most enjoyable time to move about was before breakfast, ere the great heat began. I spent this time in visiting some of the native huts, and in wandering about in the woods near the station. There I found a group of negroes, squatting on the ground, offering a few native wares for sale. I purchased from one a fine basket, oval shaped and very strong, made of dried grass; it was ornamented with rude geometrical figures and a few designs, fearfully and wonderfully made, which were probably intended to represent horses. It was large and I found it most useful for bringing home my smaller curiosities, and on its safe arrival in England, my wife quickly appropriated it for a work-basket, and found it invaluable.

I spent all the morning wandering again through the cool glades of the Rain Forest and along the brink of the gorge, of which I felt I could never see enough. I took my camera in order to bring away with me some pictures of the wonderful scenery; but, as on the previous day, I did not sufficiently estimate the intensity of the tropical light, especially with the water views. Nearly all the films were considerably over-exposed, only those taken under the shade of the trees being anything of a success.

It was glorious to ramble leisurely through the luxuriant forest, with its wild tropical growth on all sides except the one where it bordered the mist-covered gorge. Many of our friends were there, the botanists with spade and

trowel rooting up beautiful plants and ferns; the zoologists poking and prying into all the crannies and crevices, or among the fallen trees, searching for specimens of insect and reptile life. Our ornithologists found a world of interest in watching for the appearance of the rare and wonderful birds of the place: the scarlet-chested sunbirds, emerald-spotted doves, the three-streaked bush shrikes and others. And last, but not least, our geologists were making rich finds in the gullies and channels that ran through the forest.

Occasionally we saw troops of monkeys gambolling amongst the branches of the trees; but they were very timid, and one had to remain quite still, if they were not to be frightened away.

The views of the various sections of the Falls seemed even lovelier than on the previous day. I took care to go to that steep gully, which I had discovered close to the western end of the gorge, and there I clambered down again, this time with my camera, in order to obtain a photograph of the magnificent view along the Falls.

But oh! how the sun seemed to scorch, when I came out of the cooler recesses of the Rain Forest; and the walk back to the hotel was hot and fatiguing in the extreme. I thought the way seemed further than ever, as I plodded along, at times ankle-deep in the soft, sandy track. Locusts were flying in all directions—I tried to catch some, but found them too quick for me—the air was gay with beautiful butterflies flitting about, and the entomologists of the party, who were provided with the familiar green nets, made rich captures.

Our stay at the Victoria Falls was all too short; at half-past two we had to bid a regretful adieu to this wild, primitive, but wholly delightful spot, and take our trains back

again to Bulawayo. Our visit had lasted only a day and a half, and a month would not have sufficed to exhaust the beauties of the place. We had not seen the surrounding country at its best, covered with its summer coat of greenness, nor had we seen the Zambesi at its flood; but still we had obtained really finer views of the wonderful Falls, owing to the comparative absence of mist, than we could have had at any other time of the year.

What certainly enabled us to enjoy our visit in comfort was the absence, owing to the dryness, of all the numerous insect pests which in the tropics are usually such a real drawback to thorough enjoyment. Our visit had been marred by no unpleasantness of any sort; we had seen, in comfort and almost in luxury, one of the greatest wonders of the world, right in the very heart of Equatorial Africa, thanks to the careful arrangements which the Rhodesian authorities had made for us.

All the afternoon we were travelling through the usual dried-up, forest scenery, but we now passed in daylight parts that before we had missed owing to the darkness. Now and then the sparks from the engines set ablaze the dried, hay-like grass growing by the side of the track, and when this happened to reach some of the trees, we had all the excitement of small forest fires to help us over the monotony of the journey. We saw in this way many fair-sized conflagrations during our return journey to Bulawayo, and at night time these were sometimes very fine, and lighted up the landscape for a long way off.

It was again dark when we reached Wankie in the centre of the coal-bearing area; but it was not long after sunset and we were able to see something of the life of the place. Camp fires were alight in all directions, and groups of native workers were squatting round them, eating their

LOOKING ALONG THE GORGE, VICTORIA FALLS

evening meal, and generally enjoying themselves. The mines in this district had only lately been opened up, and yet, for the year ending the March previous to our visit, nearly 65,000 tons of coal had been raised, which realized at the pit's mouth no less than £39,062.

CHAPTER XX

RETURN TO BULAWAYO—SALISBURY—MISSIONARY WORK IN SOUTH AFRICA—EDUCATION OF THE NATIVES

THE night on the train was hot and stifling, and it was a relief to quit our carriages for a few hours on reaching Bulawayo the next morning. There we found that a gymkana had been arranged for us, and, directly after lunch, we were taken out in carriages to the racecourse, some distance from the centre of the town. The drive enabled us to see some of the best residential portions of Bulawayo. We spent the whole afternoon watching the sports from the agreeable shade of the grand-stand, while the Rhodesian Volunteer band played sweet music, and a good tea was provided.

We were leaving Bulawayo at half-past five, and when we returned to the station we found our trains had been made up afresh owing to our large party breaking up into two sections, about two hundred going across Rhodesia to Beira and so home by the east coast, and the rest returning to England viâ Cape Town and the west coast. Those for the east coast were now to travel in three trains, G, H and I, and as the various compartments had been allotted somewhat haphazard, I was delighted to find that by a fortunate selection my travelling companions were to be T. S—— and S——, we three having a compartment to ourselves in H or the second train.

But what did not please me so well was that my two companions had plotted in my absence to send on my cabin trunk in the goods train, thinking it might be in the way in our carriage. As it turned out there were plenty of unoccupied shelves outside our door intended for luggage, where very much more than my modest allowance could have been stowed well out of everybody's way. I had not reckoned upon this deprivation of my reserve of clothing, and was obliged for the next few days to put up with a very scanty wardrobe, until before we reached Beira I began to feel ashamed of my appearance. I paid out my companions by borrowing linen of them whenever I could, without the slightest compunction, and they were quite ready to atone for their misdeeds by lending me all that they had.

At Bulawayo station we said good-bye to those friends who were leaving us. Sir B. L—— was returning to Kimberley to fetch his wife, and we were glad to learn that he had received a telegram with good news from her. Unfortunately soon after reaching England she had a relapse and died, to the great regret of her many friends in our party. There also we bade adieu to our genial companion and fellow trekker, Admiral M——, who in spite of his deafness had been one of our most pleasant associates. We also lost the society of A——, who was now returning to Pietermaritzburg.

I saw on the platform the kindly face of Sir William Wharton, the late Admiralty Hydrographer, who only reached as far as Cape Town, where he was taken ill with enteric fever, complicated with pneumonia, and died after a few days' illness.

Our H train left for Salisbury punctually to time, and soon afterwards we were favoured with a most lovely

tropical sunset. Sinking like an immense ball of gold in a burning copper sky, the sun presented a gorgeous spectacle as we saw it across the great open veldt; while the afterglow for the next quarter of an hour was superb, sending everybody into raptures over it.

We crossed the Shangani River soon after half-past nine, and found it a mere trickle of water and in parts practically dry. There, at the station, I had a conversation with a young settler and his wife, whose lonely house on the veldt was the only one save native huts in sight. They both expressed themselves satisfied with their prospects; they were young and could afford to wait; their health had been excellent during their three years of Rhodesian life, and they were looking forward to making the country their permanent home. This was encouraging after the pessimistic accounts we had heard in Bulawayo, and showed that if only English folks could be induced to settle on the land and patiently give the new life a fair trial, the prospects were sufficiently good to reward them for doing so.

We passed Gwelo soon after midnight, and the Globe and Phœnix mining district about four in the morning, and when we arose at six we were not far from Gatooma and still upon the open veldt. The land seemed to be better cared for; more of it had been brought under cultivation, and the whole district wore a more civilized aspect than we had seen in Rhodesia so far. Hartley was reached about eight, and from thence we went on in the blazing sunshine throughout the dry, dusty morning, until at one o'clock we arrived at Salisbury, the capital of Rhodesia, a town of considerable size and importance. We were now at the highest latitude we reached in Rhodesia, higher even than when we were at the Victoria Falls.

The station was gay with flags and decorations, and a number of rosetted gentlemen were waiting to receive us. We were placed at once in carriages and driven off to the Volunteer Drill Hall, where the town was to entertain us to lunch. Ten minutes' drive along fine, broad, and very dusty streets, laid out at right angles as at Bulawayo, and which were as yet not much built on, brought us to our destination, where the Mayor and Mayoress welcomed us.

Salisbury is situated on high land, and the country can be seen for miles around. The position is a magnificent one, and I should imagine that some of the most desirable land in Rhodesia is to be found in its neighbourhood. The country on the whole is flat; but ranges of great hills are visible in the far distance. Although the weather was extremely hot the air was delightfully fresh.

We found the luncheon-room in the Drill Hall most tastefully decorated with flags; while on the walls were hanging some splendid skins of lions and other wild animals recently shot in the neighbourhood. The tables were lavishly set out with what promised to be a fine repast; the residents and their wives sat amongst us, and we were waited upon by Mashona boys, dressed in cool-looking white linen suits. These did not make smart waiters, for although extremely willing, they were apt to lose their heads, often accepting two or more orders at once and forgetting all about them. But with sharp looking after by the head-waiters, they managed to serve us fairly well.

Speeches of welcome were given by Sir Thomas Scanlan (the Chartered Company's administrator), by the Mayor and others, and replied to by Sir William Crookes and Professor Darwin, the latter of whom took up his usual

rôle of thanking our hosts in the name of the Association. On this occasion he varied somewhat by perpetrating a joke. He told the story of two workmen in Johannesburg, who were engaged in discussing the British Association. One said, 'I have not seen them yet, when do they play?' evidently thinking we were a football team. 'One could imagine the disappointment of these gentlemen, when they saw a spectacled professor in a sun helmet, chasing butterflies with a green net.'

After luncheon the sound of music outside attracted us, and there we found a band of about a hundred Mashona lads, from six to sixteen years of age, drawn up opposite the Drill Hall, playing various simple tunes for our entertainment. Their dress was neat and sensible, but nothing of the coat and trousers style, which looks so out of place on the natives in Africa. A kind of spotted blue handkerchief of very large size was twisted into loose knickers round the waist, and coming nearly to the knees; the rest of the legs were bare, and on the body was worn a light cellular shirt leaving the arms and necks exposed; some fanciful little caps covered their heads. That was all, but it was quite enough, and it looked delightfully cool.

They marched before us to the Public Gardens opposite, where for two hours they manœuvred, executing intricate figures in musical drill, dancing and waving their flags very prettily, much to their own and our amusement. They exhibited in all these movements the most perfect discipline and order. The simple tunes they played touched us deeply, for it was affecting to hear from negro boys, so many thousands of miles away from our native land, such well-known airs as 'Home, Sweet Home,' 'Rule, Britannia,' 'God Save the King,' 'Auld Lang Syne,' and many others.

These youngsters had been trained by the Chisawasha Mission of Jesuit Fathers, and their leader was heartily congratulated by Professor Darwin on the excellence of the performance we had witnessed.

I could not help mentally contrasting this orderly display with the condition of the Mashonas less than fifteen years ago, when they were living in danger of the murderous raids of their neighbours, the Matabele. In continual fear for their property and lives, it was not possible for industry or civilization to thrive under such conditions. Now the country enjoys the blessing of peace; the white rulers police all the districts, and the children of the tribes, living in security, can be early taken in hand, and trained into habits of order, as a prelude, perhaps, to habits of industry and application as they grow older. But before they can be turned into a civilized race, we shall need to exercise our patience to the full, and not expect successful results all at once.

I might here say a few words upon the missionary question in South Africa. What gave me great pleasure, in connection with this trip, were the opportunities it afforded to study the natives and see how the immense efforts that have been made in the past have affected the black man.

There are about thirty-two missionary societies at work amongst these people; but after a whole century of teaching, and in spite of the lifelong services of numbers of devoted men, and the blood of many martyrs, the native has not yet been made a Christian. Where he is changing he is rather becoming Mahommedan, for the success of Islam on the dark continent, at any rate on the east coast, is beyond anything that Christianity can show. But among the great majority of the natives neither religion makes much headway; the negroes remain uncivilized and

barbarous, living in semi-independence under their own tribal laws and customs, and apparently not at all anxious to change them for the others which many white folk think they ought to adopt. They remain much as they always have been, with manners but little changed, except where they are obliged to conform to the requirements of the law of the land.

As already described in this book, we had come closely into contact with the natives and seen them for the heathen polygamists they really were. We had witnesed their war-like dances, had been spectators of their primitive marriage customs, wondered at the savagery of their dress and ornaments, had been into their kraals and huts and seen how they lived their life of careless idleness. We found that the missionaries had succeeded neither in converting them nor in changing their habits; and that the results which they can show for all the fabulous sums of money spent in evangelizing the heathen in South Africa were poor indeed. We heard this comparative failure admitted even by missionaries themselves, although most of them were optimistic about their work, and always ready to look forward to greater success in the future.

Of course their labour has not been all discouragement. I have already instanced Khama, the chief of the Bagamwatos, as a notable exception, and his influence has been great with his people, towards leading them to Christianity.

What are the reasons for this failure to change the negroes; a race who on account of the child-like character of their minds should be easy to convert to Christianity? We heard many reasons during the course of our journey, but I cannot vouch for them all. Our visit was only a very hurried one, and it would be unfair to form conclusions from what little we could gather in so short a time.

I cannot help thinking that one of the chief obstacles to the conversion of the natives is polygamy, and this may also account for the comparative success of the Mahommedan as compared with the Christian teachings. The Kaffir sees nothing wrong in the custom, for he and his forefathers have practised it as long as he can remember, and he will not brook interference at the dictation of others.

Now the missionaries make this a crucial point, and they will not allow a man with more than one wife to be a member of their churches. In this I cannot support the missionaries, nor can I blame the native who refuses to desert the mothers of his children. He has married them, the laws and customs of his tribe permitting, and all the traditions of his race sanctioning the marriages, and it would be as wrong for him to put them away in order to become the convert of a strange religion, as it would be for a Christian to leave his one wife in order to enter, say, a monastery, at the dictation of some priest.

Wrong is done to the negroes by insisting on such an act of injustice; it is an interference with their family life and a fruitful way of sowing discords and divisions amongst them. By all means try to keep the rising generation from polygamy, if possible, by teaching them the higher standard of monogamy; but those who are married should remain so, lest greater evil befall them.

It is pleasant to be able to record, however, that owing to several economic causes which are at work to-day among the natives, the practice of polygamy is not as prevalent as it was, but is certainly on the decrease.

Then again there does seem to be something wrong about the present methods of educating the Kaffirs. Education, instead of doing them good, seems to do them positive harm. I cannot say whether this is the fault of

the missionaries, for I do not know whether all the native schools are under their control, although I believe that most of them are. It looks very much as though the system was a failure, and whoever is responsible should see to it, that some of the methods are altered. Wherever I went, I heard the same remark: 'I can do with the raw Kaffir, but I will never have another educated native, if I can possibly avoid it—they are only hypocrites.' Some told me these educated natives were not Christians at all, others said they were genuine products of the missionary schools; but whatever they may profess in the way of religion, they bear a bad name throughout South Africa.

It seems to us in England the right thing to teach everybody to read and write; education is one of the necessities of life in a civilized country, and it is difficult for us to imagine it detrimental elsewhere, but to my mind it is a grave question whether it may not do more harm than good to races low down in the scale of evolution.

It may come in time for all, but at present the Kaffir has far more pressing needs. He requires to be taught to work, and to perform the simple duties of life. He should be shown how to make tools and implements, so that he can do his work in a better way than he has been accustomed to. He needs to be weaned from polygamy, and kept away from strong drink, and gradually to be taught to think more seriously of life and its duties. Were such teachings carefully insisted on, and reading and writing left alone at present, we might hear less of employers forbidding native Christians from entering their houses, and of the complaints in every part of the country against this class of servant.

In this connection I may quote the following extract

from the Report of the South African Native Affairs Commission lately published.

'A large class of witnesses, while not absolutely hostile to some form of literary education, apparently have regarded it as of secondary importance as compared with industrial and manual training, and have expressed themselves opposed to any considerable expenditure of public money in support of native schools. It has been represented to the Committee, with some force, that the native is more useful and contented when brought under the control of the European and so acquires habits of industry, and a knowledge of the simpler forms of the agricultural and mechanical arts.'

With all his failings the Kaffir is a good-natured, honest fellow at heart, and often uncommonly shrewd. His womenfolk, when untouched by education, are patterns of morality, and in this respect set an example to many of their white sisters. They have virtues that we might copy with advantage. In many ways they resemble children, and they need to be treated as such, firmly, but gently. But it does not do to imagine that in every one of their habits and customs they are all wrong, and that to become good citizens they must be turned into copies of Englishmen, adopting their manners, customs, dress: or, even a dogmatic religion, if unsuited to their natures and minds. To press this sort of thing too far would be to turn out hypocrites and not Christians, wastrels and not good citizens.

In these remarks I do not wish it to be understood that I depreciate the powers of Christianity and education when judiciously used. These properly applied will have their place in raising the natives from barbarism to civilization; but we need to move most cautiously, lest the transition period prove to be disastrous. I would like to emphasize another extract from the Report quoted above, which plainly shows that the sweeping away of native laws and customs may do much harm—

'It is sometimes said that civilization, or the beginnings of it, have not tended to make the native happier, more trustworthy, more civil, courteous, and obedient, and stronger physically and morally; and at the first glance there is some excuse for forming this opinion. True it is that the advent of civilization has weakened the power of what long ages had taught the natives to regard as most necessary to their social and communal life, that it has tended to loosen tribal ties, to undermine wholesome patriarchal control, and has let loose in the midst of the resultant disorganization all the temptations and vices which dog the steps of civilized advance.

. . . . . .

'Is it, therefore, surprising that much of what was picturesque, attractive, and even admirable in the native when untouched by European influences has been swept away? There are encouraging aspects. The lax morality among the women which has been so often dwelt upon as a result of freeing them from the absolute control of their parents, and sowing new temptations among them, is diminishing; and, there is growing up an ever-increasing number of self-respecting native women, who are learning to understand the freedom which has come to them and are careful not to abuse its privileges.'

We had tea in the gardens, and later on drove back again to the station. There on the platform we met our *Durham Castle* friends, Mr. Eyre, the Postmaster-General of Rhodesia, with his wife and pretty daughter. Also I chatted for some time with a prominent citizen of Salisbury, whose comments about the Chartered Company were not enthusiastic, for he seemed to think it was worked more in the interests of the officials than of the settlers. I had heard the same remarks from another resident, with whom I conversed while watching the Mashona boys. The feeling seemed to be that the company was in a bad way, and bound to fail eventually, in which event the settlers would be able to take over the administrative rights, without saddling themselves with any of the initial costs incurred by the company. It was on this account that the scheme for buying out these rights fell through some time ago. I could not sympathize with this view,

and said so, for it did not appear to me to be an honest one. It certainly did seem a great pity that there should be any friction of the sort, for each section of the community needs the other's help to make the country prosperous.

CHAPTER XXI

UMTALI—VISIT TO ANCIENT RUINS—A MIDNIGHT DANCE OF NATIVES

We left Salisbury at five amid the cheers of the onlookers, and shortly afterwards had another magnificent sunset, rivalling that of the previous evening. The night was intensely hot, and we were glad when morning came. When we rose, we were just leaving Odzi, and after an early breakfast we reached Umtali at half-past seven. There we found a most agreeable change in the scenery. The flat country had been left behind, and we were in a lovely green valley, surrounded by bold hills, which were covered with a thin forest growth.

A resident of Umtali offered to conduct any who chose to walk, to the ancient ruins about three and a half miles away across the hills. I gladly volunteered to join, and a small party of about a dozen was quickly made up and we started off. On the way we had to cross a rather wide stream by the primitive method of jumping it, and some managed to wet their feet in the process, which, however, did not matter much, for they quickly dried again in the hot sun.

Our guide turned out to be an interesting companion and gave us graphic descriptions of his early experiences. He had come on foot to Umtali from the coast and across the mountains, and had seen great changes in his twenty years'

residence in the country. His greatest grievance was against the Indians and other Asiatics who swarmed there; they monopolized all the business of the place and bid fair to swamp the country. Their presence was such a sore point that he felt sure the first act of a federated South Africa would be to send all Asiatics back to their own countries. I wondered what the Transvaalers, and Natalians, who were favourable to such labour, and whose economic progress depended upon it, would say to such a drastic proposal.

He knew all about the ruins and had often explored them thoroughly, so that we found his guidance very useful. We met there others of our friends who had driven, and wandered about together looking at everything. There was really not much to be seen and that little was by no means striking. The ruins were located on the top of one of the hills, hidden away among the trees, and might easily be missed by any one who did not know where to look for them. A small, stone-work erection, the remains probably of a much larger building, was all that could be seen. Its peculiarity was in its style of construction, which was of a type foreign to, and beyond the ability of any native tribe at present living in South Africa. If, as Mr. Randall McIver said in his lecture at Bulawayo, the ruins scattered through Rhodesia are mediæval and not ancient, they are probably the work of some comparatively civilized race of negroes which has long ago been exterminated by its more ferocious and savage neighbours.

We much regretted that the time at our disposal did not permit of our going to Zimbabwe to see the remains there, which are on altogether a larger and finer scale. As far as those at Umtali are concerned, we saw little in them to attribute to Phœnicians or any other Semitic race

of three or four thousand years ago. Professor von Luschan, who accompanied us, could also find little to support his first idea that they might be the work of some Malay people.

In none of the ruins in Rhodesia have any traces of writing been found, and this fact seems to negative their Semitic origin; but on the other hand there have been discovered at Zimbabwe undoubted traces of phallic worship, which certainly does seem to point to the cult of some very ancient people. Probably further discoveries yet await explorers, which will throw more light upon what is really a most interesting problem. During the course of the investigations at these ruins, some pieces of pottery had been excavated, of a character which showed no particular traces of being beyond the capacity of negroes to manufacture. Many shreds were still lying about, and I brought away a few samples with me.

When we had finished at the ruins, Mr. Featherbridge, as our guide was named, took us about half-a-mile away in the forest to a small creek where, under his directions, we tried our hands at a little washing for alluvial gold; but our labour did not produce for us even as much as a speck of the bright, yellow ore. This was a pity, for a nugget or two would have been interesting to bring away as souvenirs. He told us that alluvial mining near Umtali was a poor business, a day's work might yield the seeker the value of one or two shillings, but rarely more, and therefore it was an occupation that did not have many followers.

On the way back we saw several ancient gold workings, remains of a time when another race occupied the country and dug in the ground for its precious metals. The shallow shafts of most of these old mines were now nearly

A RHODESIAN FOREST

filled up with rubble, but some had been opened up again and were yielding payable quartz.

So having washed for gold, with the usual prospector's luck, and having seen all there was to be seen, we made our way back to Umtali across the hills, and on the road obtained some magnificent views of the surrounding country.

The town, as I have said, lay in a great valley; it was by no means a large place, one long wide street and a few scattered houses being all that there was of it. But its charming situation, its fertile soil, its close proximity to many payable mines, its position as frontier town of Rhodesia on the Beira and Mashonaland Railway, and the fact that the coast itself was only about twelve hours' railroad journey off; all these considerations lead me to conclude that it has a great future before it, and in course of a few years may become a very important place indeed.

Mr. Featherbridge pointed out to us, as we walked along, the remains of an old road and wall, probably mediæval, or old native work, but the purpose of which was rather difficult to guess, for they seemed to begin and end nowhere in particular.

Occasionally we passed little heaps of stones by the side of the path, and there our guide always religiously stooped down, picked a stone off the path and threw it on to the heap. To do this, he explained, was a native superstition, and no Kaffir could pass such a place without adding a stone to the slowly growing heap. Apparently white people were slaves to the superstition also, to judge from his own conduct whenever we came to these places; and yet he could not rightly say why such a thing was done; he thought perhaps the stone pitched on to the heap might be an offering to evil spirits to ward off some danger to the passers-by.

We saw much vegetation that was new to us, and I was particularly interested in one tree which bore a large crop of a green and perfectly round fruit, about the size of a cricket ball, or a little larger. Mr. Featherbridge called them kaffir oranges, and told us the fruit was quite inedible and valueless. They were so hard, so beautifully green and round, and attractive looking, that we all picked several to take away as curiosities. The one I brought back with me to England first changed from green to a yellow colour, in which condition it had a faint aroma resembling that of a quince; afterwards it gradually altered until it became quite black; but it never lost its hardness or its smooth roundness.

We were to be entertained to lunch at Umtali, as we had been at Salisbury, and the banquet was to be in the Drill Hall, so we walked on there, to the further end of the very long street which constituted the town. We were told that every lady in the place had been busy for a week past cooking and preparing for us. If this was so, the repast they gave us did them great credit, for it was an excellent one.

Of course we had the usual speeches and compliments, but these were varied on this occasion by the presence of four Portuguese officers, who had come as a deputation from His Excellency Alberto Pinto Basto, the governor of Mozambique, to welcome the British Association to Portuguese territory, and to invite us to a reception and lunch at Beira on the following day. One of these gentlemen spoke in French and extended to us a hearty welcome.

We had all been made honorary members of the Umtali Club close by, and there it was possible to get a wash and a few minutes' quiet reading before Mr. Witterby's garden party. The club bathrooms had been placed at our

disposal, and many of our members availed themselves of them; but I regret I did not know of this at the time, for owing to the scanty washing accommodation on the train, a bath would have been a luxury indeed. The club also entertained our ladies and set aside some rooms entirely for them.

The garden party was at the pretty residence of Mr. Witterby, the manager in Umtali of the Beira and Mashonaland Railway, and was a great success. A plentiful tea, with heaps of goodies, was provided, to which we did ample justice. The house was surrounded by a lovely garden, in which numbers of orange-trees were in bloom and in fruit, and bananas and pineapples were growing. There we stayed a couple of hours or so, until our H train was ready to start, and when we steamed out of the station, nearly all the town must have been there to cheer us off.

As the train left Umtali, it had apparently to find its way through impassable mountains, but as it wound round the sides of these, new passes continually opened out, disclosing views of most magnificent and ever changing scenery. The town, although itself in a valley, was actually about 4,000 ft. above sea level, and there were two great drops on the railway before the coast was reached, the first being immediately after leaving Umtali, when the gradient was very steep. We stood on the platforms of the carriages, watching the scenery, as it unfolded, until the sun set and we could see no more; and we were all prepared to agree that it was the most magnificent bit of scenery we had come across since leaving the Victoria Falls.

Eight miles from Umtali, we entered Portuguese territory, and when we reached Macequece, our first stopping place, we seemed to be in a foreign country. We

had been told to keep awake until the train reached Mandegos at a quarter to eleven, for there the natives intended to give us a typical send-off in the form of a dance by torch and bonfire light.

As the train drew up at the station, we saw a great assembly of some hundreds of negroes in a circle, dancing frantically to the beating of tom-toms and the clapping of hands. The scene was lighted up by the flames of two immense bonfires, some hundreds of feet apart, between which the natives were dancing. The whole circle of men, women and children were jumping about, clapping their hands, stamping their feet in unison, and chanting rhythmically one of their monotonous songs.

A few of them were jumping and prancing about in the centre of the ring, in a wild and abandoned fashion; twisting, kicking, turning somersaults, and springing about like madmen. Even women, with their piccaninnies tied to their backs, careered about in the same way; the little ones all the while wondering and staring at the strange proceedings, with wide-open, half-scared eyes. It was indeed a weird sight to see them dancing in this savage way, their black and almost naked bodies painted red by the glare of the smoky firelight; while the air was filled with their shouts and screams, mingled with the sound of the tom-toms, the chanting and clapping of hands, the fierce roaring of the flames, and the crackling of the burning wood. They might have been so many demons, performing their rites, or exulting over the torture of some miserable wretch.

Beyond the circle of dancers and the glare of the bonfires, was the dense blackness of the African forest, out of which we had come and into which we were again about to plunge. Truly it was a remarkable send-off for our party;

our last glimpse of savage South Africa, a sight to remember as long as we lived.

And yet these were no demons, but only a crowd of friendly Manicos giving us the sort of good-bye which appealed most to their primitive natures. It was a show performed in all good-will, and while we wondered at, and were amused by its extravagances, we fully appreciated and were gratified by it. But it was difficult to realize that such scenes should form part of the ordinary life of men upon the same planet that has developed the civilization of Europe, and produced the minds of a Newton or a Darwin.

After a quarter of an hour, our train started off again and we retired to rest, for we were to reach Beira early next morning.

CHAPTER XXII

BEIRA—A PORTUGUESE BANQUET—MOZAMBIQUE

WHEN we awoke we were passing through some of the densest forest jungle we had so far seen, for we were in the coast belt where the rainfall is always more plentiful than in the interior. The tangle of undergrowth looked green and fresh in comparison with the burnt-up aspect of Rhodesia generally. Swamps abounded throughout this part of Africa, rendering the climate enervating and unhealthy for Europeans.

At eight o'clock we reached Beira, where the station was gay with flags and decorations; salvos of rockets were being let off in all directions, and crowds stood on either side of the line to welcome us. Any number of negroes were waiting to take our luggage to the docks, and scores of empty trolleys stood ready for our use.

There were no vehicles other than these in Beira, owing to the absence of all draught animals, which cannot live in the country owing to the tetse-fly and the prevalence of coast fever. The trolleys were very light carriages and ran on narrow rails down all the streets, being pushed along by the natives. They mostly seated two persons, although some were larger and carried four or more passengers: they ran very easily on the rails, and nearly all had hoods to protect the riders from the sun. The roads were only sand-tracks, with pavements on either side, and

the rails for the trolleys were laid down the centres, with branches into all the side-streets.

A courteous Portuguese official at once placed me in one of these little carriages, and I was pushed across a bridge, along a road and on to the docks beyond. I found the riding slow but pleasant, and it was a picturesque sight to see the procession of our members thus making its way along. At the docks tugs were waiting to take us out to the *Durham Castle,* whose familiar grey outline we could see as she lay in the harbour. Thus in a sort of royal state, pushed along decorated streets, amid salutes of rockets going off all around us, we came to the water's edge and were soon once more on our good old ship.

The first thing I did was to have a sea-bath. The water from the harbour might have been clearer, but it was cleaner than I was, and I felt much refreshed by it. I could make no change in my clothes, for my luggage had not yet arrived, so I had to freshen myself up as well as I could to attend the Governor's reception, for which I felt that my travel-stained dress was hardly fitting. Many of my companions were in a like condition, however; and as nothing better could be done, we had to make the best of it, and at half-past ten we went on shore again, where a number of trolleys took us through decorated streets in a long procession to the Governor's house about a mile away.

As we went, the negro pushing my carriage sent it on too impulsively, and one of the front wheels ran against the heel of the native who was pushing the car immediately in front, causing an ugly wound which bled profusely, for a piece of flesh about the size of half-a-crown had been sliced off. The poor fellow did not seem to mind it much; he scarcely looked at the gash, but went on without a word, leaving blood-stains in the sand with every step.

At the house we were received by His Excellency, and signed our names in the visitors' book. Then we went on to the verandah and did our best to converse with a number of Portuguese officers, who bravely attempted what English they knew. The Englishman abroad generally expects everybody to speak his language, or he cannot get on; and so it was in Beira, for our knowledge of Portuguese was lamentably small. Some of the officers, who did not know English, tried French instead, and so with one language or another we managed to understand each other very well. Cooling drinks of soda and seltzer water, flavoured with various syrups, were handed to us, and were much appreciated, for our perennial thirst was upon us.

The house was a pretty, two-storeyed building, with a verandah running round each storey. We afterwards gathered on the lower one and in the garden in front of it, in order that the whole party might be photographed. The photographs turned out very successfully, and I had a copy sent on to me afterwards from Beira.

Thus an hour or so quickly slipped by, until it was time to make our way back to the harbour again. This we did in the trolleys as we had come, and having a little time to spare when we alighted, we walked about and made a few purchases. I secured some assegais, which I had not been able to get in British South Africa, where the authorities were supposed to have taken them all away from the natives as a precautionary measure.

At one o'clock we made our way to the custom-house, where, in a large, tastefully decorated building, a fine lunch was set out; a very much better use to put the place to than the customary one of rummaging over one's baggage for contraband articles. A military band discoursed

ARRIVAL AT THE GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, BEIRA

sweet music, and there was a foreign air about the whole proceedings that delighted us immensely. Each one had his own seat allotted to him by ticket, and many of the residents of the place sat amongst us, with whom, when they could not speak English or any known available language, we did our best to converse by signs and gestures. But at last we were often reduced to the usual little table courtesies, the passing of wines and the clinking of glasses when healths were drunk, to show our interest in one another.

Our very difficulties made what little intercourse we could indulge in all the pleasanter and merrier, and the gathering was thoroughly enjoyed both by hosts and guests. The lunch itself was good and quite different in style from those we had lately eaten, for the cooking was foreign and many of the dishes unknown to us. One of the sweets I marvelled at; it was something between a plum-pudding and a baked jam-pudding, garnished with stewed peaches and apricots, and covered with syrup; a rich fare, but really very nice.

Professor Darwin, speaking in French, gave the toast of the King of Portugal. He alluded to the ancient alliance between the two countries, and referred to the discoveries in Africa made by early Portuguese explorers. He told of the battlefields on which Portuguese and English had fought side by side, and rejoiced that now again they were united in fighting the battles of science. This toast was drunk to the strains of the Portuguese national anthem.

Then the Governor, speaking in Portuguese, proposed the health of King Edward VII. He also eulogized the time-honoured alliance between the two countries, and extolled the popularity of His Majesty. While this toast

was cordially honoured, 'God Save the King' was sung, and rockets were fired off outside. The toast of the British Association followed and then we had other speeches; and it was felt that the gathering had been a great success in every way, for the utmost enthusiasm and good-fellowship prevailed.

After the speeches were all over, we said good-bye to our good friends and made our way to the tugs, which conveyed us to the *Durham Castle*. It was said that our embarking was like the setting out of a warlike expedition, for nearly everybody carried assegais, shields, or some kind of weapon.

We heard that a large sum of money had been raised in Beira for our entertainment. We had been treated splendidly, everything had been free to us, trolleys, tugs, service; our luggage had been conveyed free and unexamined through the Customs and placed on board our ship; the usual duty of 20*s*. per head, levied at the port, had been waived for us; everything had been done that courtesy and kindliness could prompt to make us feel that we were honoured guests.

We left the harbour, as soon as all were on board; and as we passed the Portuguese man-of-war on guard, we gave them a hearty cheer and they gave us a parting salute; then we all settled down for our long voyage up the east coast of Africa. We had been absent from the vessel nearly a month, but everything was very familiar to us. Our numbers were now larger, and all the first-class accommodation having been filled up, a portion of the third-class deck had been fitted to take the surplus passengers. By turning each six-berth third-class cabin into one for two only, and repainting and decorating them, some fine roomy accommodation had been obtained.

T—— S—— and I retained our old berths by ourselves in cabin 12.

The weather kept beautifully fine and the sea was smooth, although we experienced rather more rolling than we had previously done. I think this was accounted for by the fact that, owing to the absence of heavy cargo, the ship was several feet higher out of the water than on the outward journey. It was pleasant to sleep on board once more, free from the continual disturbances incidental to railway travelling; and we found our morning sea-baths a great luxury after missing them for so long.

Among those who were returning with us, but who had not come out in the *Durham Castle,* were Professor Darwin with his wife and son; Lord Rosse, Sir William and Lady Crookes, Sir Richard Jebb, M.P., Colonel Sir Scott Moncrieff and Lady Moncrieff, Sir Benjamin Baker, Professor Poulton with his wife and two daughters, Dr. and Mrs. Ruffer of Alexandria, Professor Perry (our treasurer), and many others.

It was Sunday afternoon when we left Beira, and by Tuesday soon after lunch, we reached Mozambique and there came to anchor. The funnels and masts of a sunken vessel, a German ship that had gone down about a year ago, could be seen a short distance from the shore. There she lay, undisturbed, and apparently no one thought it worth while to do anything to her.

We had not long to stay, but many passengers took the opportunity of spending an hour or so on shore. The town, which belonged to Portugal, was situated on an island; it was a decayed-looking place, bearing an air of departed gentility, as though it had seen better days. This was, indeed, the case, for when the East African slave trade flourished, a large business was done there in

'black ivory.' Its former reputation in this line may perhaps account for the unfriendly, not to say hostile, attitude of the natives on the mainland, of whom little seemed to be known, and that little far from satisfactory. Some said that they were cannibals, but I should doubt this without very strong evidence in its support.

On board it was interesting to watch the excitement going on all round the ship, where natives with boats crowded to sell their wares. Shells seemed to be the chief commodities obtainable, some of them being of exquisite shapes and colouring, and these were bought in large quantities by our party and by the crew. Some lovely pieces of coral were also on sale and eagerly bought up. The natives did not come on board, and the method of barter was as follows: the seller would fill a basket with his wares and ask a certain price; the number of fingers he held up implying the number of shillings required. The purchasers generally offered about half this amount, which, after much head-shaking and vigorous and unintelligible language, was usually accepted. The negro seller would then throw a rope on deck to which a basket was attached, and this was drawn up and the money deposited in it, and then lowered back into the boat. It was astonishing to see how keen and correct about the right money these natives were; they never seemed to make any mistakes, although we could tender only English coins.

Passenger steamers do not often call at Mozambique, where there is little to induce a visit, and the advent of one of the size of the *Durham Castle* was an unparalleled event; we were told that it was the largest vessel that had ever called there.

The native boats were primitive affairs, and Professor von Luschan offered twenty shillings for one, which price

was accepted, to everybody's amusement, and he was the subject of much chaff as to what he was going to do with it. However, the bargain was concluded, and the boat hauled up on deck and stowed away for conveyance to Europe; and it is now to be seen, I believe, in the Berlin Museum, for he told me that was to be its destination.

I had pricked my finger, while gathering some flowers at the Victoria Falls, and in the train the wound had festered and become troublesome; it was just on the top knuckle of the forefinger of the right hand and constantly in the way for getting knocked or otherwise damaged. I had treated it with carbolic and afterwards with boracic powder; but as it had not started to heal, I concluded that the dirt and discomfort of railway travelling had not allowed it a chance to do so, and I quite expected that the cleanliness and quiet on board ship would soon put it right again. However, this did not happen, if anything it became worse, so I felt inclined to sit still on deck and not move about much, to avoid injuring it; and after our strenuous time in South Africa, I found the rest very agreeable.

It was confirmed, to our great regret, that owing to the outbreak of plague, we were not to call at Zanzibar, and it can be well imagined how much we felt the disappointment. We had been promised a day or two there, at the least, and all had looked forward to a most enjoyable time, for the place is exceedingly interesting and well worth a visit. However, there was no help for it, we certainly should not be allowed on shore, so the Captain put well out to sea and we went by the place out of sight of land. Owing to this disappointment and as a little compensation, we were promised a day longer at Mombasa than we had expected.

CHAPTER XXIII

MOMBASA—A TRIP UP THE UGANDA RAILWAY

WE arrived at Mombasa on Friday, September 22, at noon. The town is situated on an island, and it possesses the finest harbour on the east coast of Africa. The whole coast is protected for miles out at sea by immense coral reefs or barriers, over which, as we approached, we could see the breakers foaming. There are two arms of the sea by means of which the place can be reached, and we chose the one on the opposite side of the island to Mombasa.

The appearance of the land as we drew near was very lovely, looking gloriously green in the brilliant sunshine, with its dense tropical vegetation growing down almost to the water's edge. Enormous mango trees, thick with the densest of foliage, grew in profusion; the darkness of their rich green forming a splendid contrast to the lighter hues of the thousands of cocoanut palms, which covered the hill-sides. Interspersed among them were plantations of bananas, their great, broad leaves waving to the fresh breeze which was blowing.

It was a vision of tropical luxuriance that opened out before us, as we slowly steamed up the arm of the sea which we had entered; winding among the lovely, green-clad hills, until we dropped our anchor at a little place called Kilindini.

A boat bringing officials soon put off to welcome us. They stated that we had arrived a day earlier than we were expected; that they had arranged a reception for the following day, and trips had been organized for our enjoyment. They were prepared, however, to provide at once for our entertainment, and boats would soon come off from the shore to take us to the land, where as many as liked could go up the Uganda Railway in a special train, as far as Maceras, to see the scenery. The rest of the party might go into Mombasa and visit the places of interest there. On the following day the special train would again be at our service to take to Maceras any who could not go on the first day.

They told us that it had been arranged originally for trains to be at our disposal to take the whole party right up into the big game country at Nairobi, which was three-quarters of the way to Lake Victoria Nyanza; but again the prevalence of plague, which had broken out up country, had put a stop to what would have been one of the most delightful of tours. We must, therefore, be content to go only as far as Maceras, but they promised that the beauty of the scenery would surprise us.

The following day we were to be entertained to lunch by the residents of Mombasa, while trains and boats would be free to us during our visit.

All this was good news indeed, and we quickly made our way on shore, where we divided into two parties, some going to Mombasa, and some up the Uganda Railway. I went with the latter party, but as there was some time to spare before starting, a few of us walked first to Mombasa, along a beautiful road among the mangoes and cocoa-nuts, bananas and baobab trees that lined the way; and where some of our entomologists made fine

captures of many new species of beautifully-coloured butterflies.

Mombasa was about a mile and a half from Kilindini. Copious rains had fallen during the previous night; the vegetation wore the freshest of green hues; lovely flowers were blooming everywhere; the road was free from dust, and the air delightfully fresh and not too hot, although we were nearly up to the equator. After the dry sterility of South Africa, this bounteous growth and profusion of luxuriant greenness on all sides was very pleasing.

The latitude of Mombasa is 4° 5′ south, and it has a climate which is a perpetual summer; new leaves replace the old as they fall, and the trees are continually in fruit; two crops being yielded every year. It was surprising to see bananas in bloom, or with fruit just beginning, and others where the bunches were ready for gathering—all growing side by side together. On most of the cocoanut palms, the nuts which hung in great clusters were still green, or just ripening.

After a short stay at Mombasa, the train picked us up and soon carried us into the country. The carriages were fitted outside with screens of woodwork to shield the travellers from any direct rays of sunshine; and this gave them a heavy appearance and a free look-out from the windows could not be had. But most of the party crowded outside on the platforms at either end of the compartments, where, if the sun was hot, the air was fresher, and whence a lovely view of the country could be obtained.

We travelled some distance amid dense groves of cocoanut palms and banana plantations. The former grew to a great height, and nearly all were full of immense clusters of nuts hanging at the tops of the long, bare

trunks, just where the great feather-like leaves began to branch out. I counted more than six dozen nuts on some of the trees, and underneath, the ground was strewn with the fallen fruit. Many of the tall trunks were notched all the way up with cuts large enough to take the toes of the negroes who climb them to gather the nuts. From what I saw of these groves, together with the absence or extreme timidity of the monkeys, I should imagine the stories of the latter saving the pickers the labour of gathering the nuts by throwing them down at them in anger, are as tall as the palms themselves.

Some distance further on the train emerged into open country, and crossing a bridge 1,732 ft. long connecting the island with the mainland, it made its way, snorting and puffing, to higher and higher ground, winding in and out among the hills along the steepest of gradients.

Many natives were working in the fields or among the plantations, dressed in gay, bright-coloured, but scanty costumes, somewhat after the style of the dresses of the East Indians who abound in Mombasa. They looked fine fellows, coal-black in colour, and, like their brethren in South Africa, apparently not very industrious. Some were employed on the railway, and very important and smart they looked in their khaki uniforms; and yet only a few years ago they were living the wild life of savages, the stronger tribes preying upon the weaker and their hands against every man.

'When we were making the railway,' said an official to me, 'we had to keep a sharp look-out, as we crossed the hills, for we never knew what treachery might lurk on the other side.'

The interior was then occupied by many negro tribes, and generally the strongest raided the rest unmercifully.

But with the advent of the railway all this has changed, the country has grown quiet, the weaker tribes have been protected and have learned to trust the newcomers, so that the continual fear in which they lived has given place to a feeling of confidence.

The importation into the country of arms and ammunition has been prohibited, and laws strictly check or regulate the liquor traffic. The iron horse, backed up by the firm, but just, rule of the English, has done in three years a thousandfold more than the missionaries, at the daily risk of their lives, had been able to do in thirty years. The railroad is the best missionary that Equatorial Africa has ever known.

As the train reached still higher levels, we obtained magnificent views of the surrounding country. We could see enormous distances in the clear atmosphere, and were looking down upon a country covered in every direction with the densest of tropical forests; viewing from above their immense tangles of trees and undergrowth, in the dim recesses of which lurked the great wild beasts of Equatorial Africa, the lions, tigers and hyenas of the jungles, the hippopotami and rhinoceroses of the swamps and rivers.

On our left, in the far distance, a long range of mountains could be seen; the highest peak of which, only just discernible to our sharpest eyes, was the famous active volcano Kilimanjaro, within the borders of the German East African territory. The scenery was, indeed, most magnificent, equal to anything I have ever seen in any part of the world; it surpassed all expectations we had formed from the descriptions given to us when we arrived; and it was one of the most delightful experiences of our fascinating tour to be able to see it in comfort as we did.

Maceras was a little way-side station, very prettily situated, with a few houses close by; a romantic spot, all in the wilds by itself, and a healthy place to live in, I should imagine, from its high altitude. There we roamed about for a while, picking the most lovely and peculiar flowers, or purchasing fruit from the natives. Bananas were sold at a penny per dozen, and green cocoanuts were almost given for the asking. I procured two of the latter in their great, green shells, which with some trouble I was able to bring safely to England.

One of the flowers that I picked was extremely beautiful and quaint; it was shaped exactly like coral and of a lovely scarlet colour, while in among its slender arms nestled its round, green fruit. It was so pretty that I longed to be able to show it to my friends at home; but although it lived for several days in my cabin, it faded and perished long before England was reached.

We returned to Kilindini, passing through the same lovely scenery, but viewing it this time in the golden glow of the setting sun, and it looked if anything grander than ever. It was quite dark when we reached the water's edge where boats waited, and we were rowed out to our ship by starlight. Many residents from Mombasa, with their wives and daughters, were entertained to dinner on board; after which there was a dance on deck followed by a supper, and it was late before they left and we got to bed.

The following morning we were up early and on shore directly after breakfast. The party that had seen over Mombasa now took the trip to Maceras, while we who had been up the railway were taken to Mombasa, and there conducted round the town by some of the residents.

We went first to see the old fort, which was used as a barracks and prison. It was an interesting building more

than 400 years old, and from the flat roof we obtained splendid views of the sea and the surrounding country. In its time it had been in the hands of the Arabs, Portuguese, Zanzibaris, and now of the English. The flag of the Sultan of Zanzibar still floated over it, for Mombasa nominally belongs to him, while we protect and govern the country under his suzerainty.

We saw all over the fort and the prisons, and then walked through the Indian quarter of the town, where a population of 5,000 Asiatics lived. These industrious people swarm everywhere along the east coast of Africa, and monopolize nearly all the trade of the country. Their part of the town reminded me very much of the native quarter of Algiers with its narrow streets, open bazaars, white mosques and general oriental type of life. We passed one of the Mahommedan cemeteries, where we saw many little, peculiar-shaped, mud erections, not at all picturesque and much neglected, which were the graves.

Passing out of this quarter of Mombasa, we went round the native town, where the negroes lived in huts, something like, but rather better than, those we had seen so often in South Africa. I walked with the late Sir Richard Jebb through these parts, and took a few photos as we went. He and I lingered on the way to look more closely at some of the curious sights which we saw, and which greatly amused us.

We then went to the Cathedral, a stucco-covered, buff building of mosque-like appearance, having a large central dome and smaller ones at each corner. It was not beautiful outside, nor was the interior very ornate; and in many places, where stained-glass windows might have been expected, there were only louvre-blinds, which excluded the sunshine but not the air. Under the large dome was a

brass tablet on the wall, stating that the dome had been erected in memory of Bishop Hannington, the missionary who was murdered in 1886 in Uganda.

In Beira and Mozambique, which are Portuguese towns, our English money was gladly accepted everywhere, but in Mombasa, which is under our control and rule, the officials at the post office would not look at it. The proper currency was rupees and annas, and we were obliged to change our money somewhere in the town into this coinage before we could procure the necessary postage-stamps for our letters to England.

I was reckless enough to ask for a rupee's worth of coppers, in order to be provided with some small change; and in return was handed such a number of these coins, each one about the size of our halfpenny, that I could hardly carry the load, and staggered along literally burdened with wealth. I thought I should never get rid of them all during my short visit; but soon found that a dozen pieces or so went nowhere towards the payment for even one postcard.

After completing our purchases, we took the train, which had come to fetch us to the lunch in the grounds of the Sports Club. There we found two long open tents, erected under the shade of some immense mango trees, where, practically in the open air, but comfortably protected from the blazing sun, we sat and enjoyed ourselves.

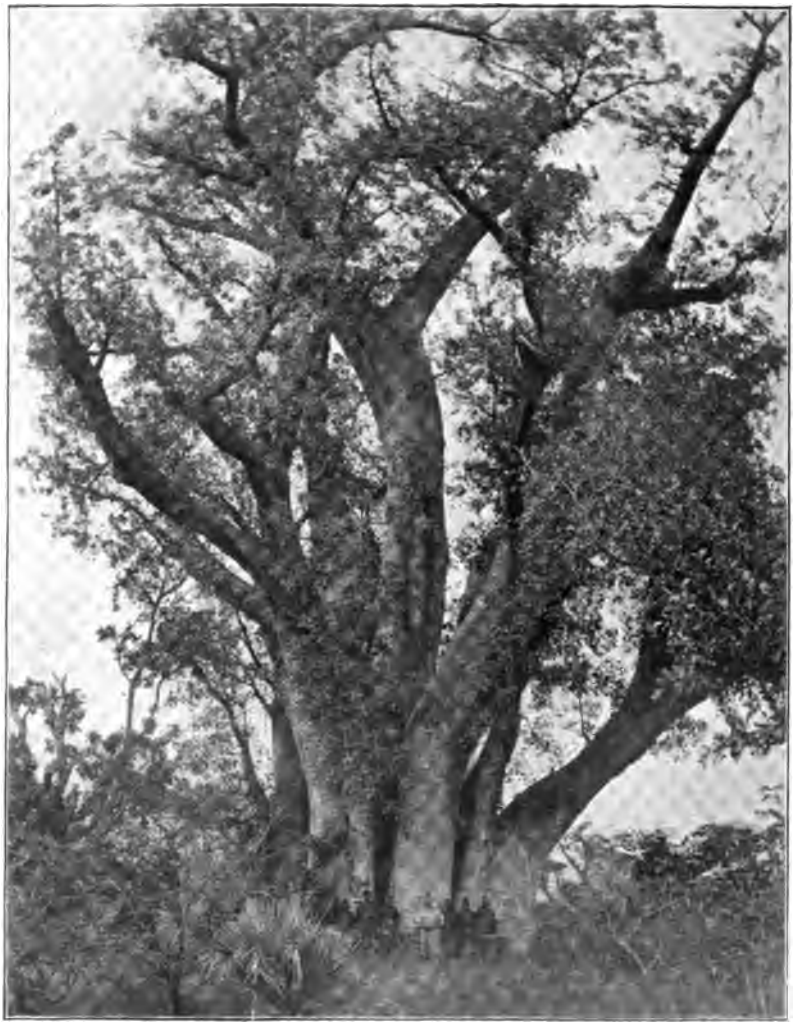
A feature of our entertainment was a great heap of green cocoanuts which had just been gathered fresh for us. The outer covering was removed, and the top of the inner shell cut off to get at the liquid, and then a cup of milk, fresh but rather warm, was obtained, each nut holding nearly a pint. The milk was not rich like that from the ripe nuts we purchase in England; but it tasted thinner

and was more like water, with only a slight flavour of the nut. It was, however, a better thirst quencher than anything I had tasted up till then. The nut itself, being quite unripe, was of no value, and was thrown away when the liquid had been taken out.

After lunch was over we strolled about among the trees, or sat and chatted until half-past three, when a train came along to take us to the *Durham Castle*.

Some of our members, instead of going over Mombasa, had spent the morning, wandering through the woods and along the sea-shore, collecting curiosities in the form of butterflies, plants, or flowers. They had been fortunate enough to see a few of those nondescript creatures known as climbing fish. These extraordinary objects crawled out of the water and climbed trees for the purpose, I suppose, of feeding upon any insects they could find on the branches; and they managed to work themselves along by manipulating their fins and tails in some way. They were very difficult to observe, because of their timidity and the speed with which they made for the water when disturbed.

A fair trade in ivory is done from Mombasa, and we saw quantities ready for shipment, some of the tusks being of great value. Now that the railroad has been opened up to the Victoria Nyanza, where a regular service of steamers plies along the lake, a good trade is springing up in all sorts of produce, and this finds its natural outlet at Mombasa. The line already pays working expenses and a little over, and is sure to prove a valuable asset, in addition to developing and opening up the country.



BAOBAB TREE

CHAPTER XXIV

GULF OF ADEN—RED SEA—SUEZ

As the steamer put out to sea once more, we had a fine view of the coral reefs all round the coast. The wind was blowing freshly, and a good sea running, so that there was much more surf breaking over the rocks than when we entered; and we could easily trace out the enormous lagoons of calm water formed within the barrier reefs.

My finger became so much worse, owing to the two days on shore, that I had to consult the doctor about it as soon as I rejoined the boat. He at once pronounced the wound a 'veldt sore,' and said that, if neglected, it would probably spread over the whole of the hand, as its peculiarity was to suppurate round its margin and so spread and spread. It had been caused by the fine dust of the veldt working its way into the prick and setting up irritation.

The weather continued to grow warmer, and we were all inclined to sit about and do nothing; all deck games and sports were by general consent postponed until we reached the Mediterranean Sea. In spite of the heat, or rather because of it, Bridge, being a game that did not call for any bodily exertion, flourished exceedingly; and so many card parties were made up, that it was often difficult to obtain tables whereon to play.

We had glorious sunsets every evening, and the colours that then spread over the sky were most beautiful in their

tints of the daintiest greens, pinks and blues. Every one used to gather on the port side of the ship as the sun touched the horizon in order to watch it sink into the sea, and great interest attached to this, because just as the last speck of light vanished a green ray flashed upwards. We had seen this phenomenon on a few occasions during the outward voyage, but never so perfectly or so frequently as we did on this return journey, when nearly every evening the sun went down in a cloudless sky. As the green ray flashed out, a chorus of admiration would break from the assembled crowd of spectators.

Of course we had much discussion as to the origin of this ray; some thought it merely subjective, a complementary colour to the orange of the sun, which had just disappeared; but the most generally received opinion was that the ray was really objective and was due to differential refraction.

On several occasions we observed whales throwing up spouts of water not far from the ship. Once we saw the greater part of the back of one monster, but usually only the jets of water could be seen; and these were by no means as impressive as picture-books lead one to expect.

Under the doctor's cure, my finger had its ups and downs, but on the whole went on satisfactorily, while his treatment gave great relief to the intolerable irritation it had caused me. Professor Darwin was also being attended to for a sore leg, and we chatted together while waiting our turns, for our President was very particular not to be seen to, out of his fair order. A third-class passenger, or one of the sailors, must be doctored first, if he happened to be there first.

After we rounded Cape Gardafui and entered the Gulf of Aden, the heat became intense; we sat and sweltered all

day long and were never dry from perspiration night or day. It was torture to go down into the saloon for meals, and many did so in very light attire. And yet on Friday, September 29, we gathered there in numbers during the morning, to hear a lecture upon *The Portuguese in South Africa,* a most interesting discourse, which traced back the history of their explorations and expeditions to the earliest records; and this was followed by an instructive discussion.

At noon on the same day we came to the Island of Perim, and passed through the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb into the Red Sea. Why it was ever called 'Red' puzzled us all, for at the straits the water was a deep green colour. The prospect was most delightful as we steamed among the many islands that crowded this part. Once on a time, this must have been a mountainous country, before the sea covered the land, for the many islands we passed rose sharply out of the water, and looked exactly like the tops of mountains, and there were often several of them very close together.

By the next day we had again lost sight of land, the islands had all disappeared, and the sea was once more of a most lovely blue colour. Why it should be called 'Red' still exercised our minds, and discussions went on about it, but opinions differed.

Some—our clerical friends—said that the name was derived from the land of Edom, whose borders it washed; this, however, was open to dispute, and in any case the land was just as likely to have taken its name from the sea, as the sea from the land. Others supposed that great masses of red algæ floated occasionally on the waters and coloured it; but none of our officers ever remembered to have seen this phenomenon. Some thought that the word 'Red' might be a corruption of some older and now for-

gotten name. So the question remained unsettled, like many other questions that puzzle poor humanity, when once the origin of things is inquired into.

Even the heat could not check our ardour to learn, and lectures still went on; but on deck at last, for every one protested against going below. On one occasion the subject was on *The Former Land Connection between Africa and other Continents,* and the consensus of opinion was that it had been with South America and Australasia by means of the Antarctic continent, and with the Indies and Malaya through Madagascar, by land which once extended in that direction. On another occasion we discussed about the *Geological Condition of the African Continent,* and in this way many instructive and delightful hours were passed.

The first three days in the Red Sea proved to be the hottest of the voyage; we sat on deck and sweltered, and drank lemon squash all day long, until the fruit ran short and the stuff served to us became almost too thin to be nice. Coats and waistcoats were unbearable, and the lightest of costumes were seen everywhere. Our bath water, drawn direct from the sea, registered 90°. It was torture to go down to meals, and very few attended the Sunday morning service, with the result that the evening one was held on deck.

It began to be remarked that no outward-bound steamers had passed us since we came through the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. I had been told that they always went by in one continuous stream, and therefore hazarded the opinion that the canal must be blocked, a suggestion which proved to be true. The water still remained of an intensely blue colour, and evening after evening most remarkable sunsets were seen over Egypt.

As we could take no exercise during the heat of the day time, a few of us had physical drill every morning on deck before our baths. The exercise made us perspire so profusely that our pyjamas were usually wringing wet when it was over; but the drill did us good, and kept our livers from getting too sluggish owing to the heat and our consequent disinclination to move about during the day.

The exercises were given by our fellow member H. D. Ferrar, the same who had lectured to us at Pietermaritzburg upon *Antarctic Exploration*. He had been one of the officers on the *Discovery*, and the drill he gave us was the same as was performed in that vessel during its long sojourn in the southern seas. How different the conditions under which we did it beneath the broiling sun of the Red Sea!

Professor von Luschan was very busy all this time, taking anthropometric measurements of our heads, height, length of arms, colour of eyes, skin, position of teeth and many other details for a treatise he proposed writing. He explained that it was easy for him to go to a prison, or workhouse, and there get details from any number of the classes who usually patronize such establishments; but it was very rarely that an opportunity offered like the present one for examining the heads and getting all the particulars he required from such a representative body of scientists as the British Association. He was delighted to have the chance, and so in spite of the heat, which made every one else limp and languid, he worked away with exemplary zeal. He afterwards confided to me that he had found the average size of our heads to be larger than the normal. This was a satisfactory conclusion, at any rate.

In spite of the heat we had occasional concerts and entertainments, and the younger members even developed

enough energy to get up several dances. C—— was busy play-writing, as on the outward voyage, and one evening an amusing farce of his was admirably performed by a good company.

The plot was, as the programme said, 'too complicated for the ordinary intelligence,' so I dare not attempt to explain it in any detail; but will merely say that it all seemed to hang round the abduction of the President of the 'British Association for the Prevention of Science.' He had been spirited away by some discontented members of the 'Unofficial Party,' and the method of his eventual recovery, through the agency of 'Sherlock Doyle,' formed the plot, and gave occasion for many topical jokes upon the troubles that had marred the perfect satisfaction of our South African trip.

However, the President was at last found tied up in a sack, but before he was allowed to be released, a long list of the grievances of the 'unofficial' members was read over to him. Then he was set free, and to the amusement of everybody a monkey was found to be the occupant of the sack. This was very funny, because Professor Darwin was in the front row of the audience; and we all roared with laughter, when, holding the creature up, 'Sherlock Doyle' exclaimed, in surprised tones, 'I see the President has reverted to his ancestral type.' The play was a great success, and we were highly amused in spite of its absurdity, or rather because of it.

After nearly a week of the Red Sea, we entered the Isthmus of Suez, and all that day we were passing the Sinaitic Peninsula on our right and obtained a splendid view of its great range of mountains along the coast. The exact locality of the Mount Sinai of the Bible did not seem to be known; a number of peaks were pointed out to us,

and we were allowed to take our choice, for any one might have been the site. We could not see the desert of Sinai, for this lay on the further side of the great range of mountains.

We were about eight miles from the land, and our view of the long line of serrated peaks was a very beautiful one. The colour of the barren-looking soil was sandy yellow, but it was all tinged with a pinky hue, owing probably to the haze of the distance, and to the fact that we saw it across the stretch of intensely blue sea that lay between. To our left, about three miles off, was the land of Egypt, monotonously flat and desert-like, while all along our course were many sandstone islands, very much weathered, and which would have been worn away ages ago, but for the fact that rain rarely falls upon them.

As the sun set, the scene became increasingly beautiful. The great orb sank like a ball of blood-red fire in a copper sky, sending up the most lovely-coloured streamers after it had disappeared; while the halo and glory of the after-glow seemed to linger much longer than usual. Looking away from the sun across to the Sinaitic Mountains, the whole range was lighted up by a strange, silver glory, as though it had been turned to pearl by the touch of a magician's wand. The golden effulgence on the one side, and the pearly whiteness on the other, made an extremely beautiful contrast. I wondered whether it might be to this peculiar glory, which must often have been seen by the people of olden days, that some of the legends connected with this land owed their inception.

We reached Suez on Wednesday, October 4, at eight in the morning, and there we learned for the first time that the canal was blocked, owing to the blowing-up of the dynamite steamer *Chatham*. In all probability we should

not be able to pass through for a week. Later on in the morning, modified estimates were spread about; but it was quite clear that there was no immediate chance of getting through. Over thirty-six ships were waiting their turn to enter the canal as soon as it was clear, and all these would have to pass in before us. It was a splendid sight to see them lying at anchor all round us, many of them being great liners belonging to the Peninsular and Oriental, Norddeutscher Lloyd, Orient, and other companies.

We, therefore, decided to leave the *Durham Castle* and to go on at once by rail to Cairo, and there wait developments. This plan would give us at least three or four days in Egypt, and we could rejoin the ship at Port Said after she had passed the canal. So partaking of an early lunch, we went on shore, leaving behind a few who did not care to go to Cairo, or who had been there already.

At Suez station a special train was waiting for us, and we started for Cairo almost immediately. It was intensely hot on the land, and for the first two hours the heat in the train was almost unbearable. Louvre-blinds shut out the sun from the carriages, but nothing availed to keep us cool; and if we ventured to lift them on the sunny side the hot blast from the desert seemed to burn us up. For mile after mile, we passed over the most monotonously sandy desert imaginable. As far as the eye could reach there stretched out before us nothing but sand, sand, glaring and burning in the sunshine.

Occasionally we saw mirages in the distance, steely blue in colour, looking for all the world like great lakes of limpid water; and now and again we came across small patches of green vegetation, in places where a little irrigation had been possible, but taken as a whole the first

half of our journey was through a barren Sahara-like desert.

After two hours the air seemed to cool a little and the irrigated patches of land became more frequent, but the change was not great until we passed Kassassin and Tel-el-Kebir. There we saw a cemetery with the graves of some of our soldiers, who fell in the battles of those districts; also at Tel-el-Kebir the trenches made by our men were still visible.

At Zagazig, further on, more signs of life were noticeable, for the place contained a thriving population. I believe cotton-spinning was one of its chief industries.

Then an entire change came over the aspect of the country; we had left the desert behind us and were now upon the land reached by the fertilizing waters of the Nile. Splendid fields of crops could everywhere be seen; great tracts of maize and cotton followed each other with monotonous regularity, interspersed occasionally with fields of millet and other grains.

A canal ran alongside the railway, and from this numberless small channels of water branched off on both sides. These again divided into smaller and still smaller trenches, which spread the water all over the land. We had come to Egypt at the time of high Nile, and these channels were full of water.

Now and again we saw great wooden wheels, worked by oxen or camels, bringing up the water out of the canal into the channels. The wheels were fitted with buckets, which lifted the liquid, and poured it into conduits, from whence it was conveyed as required. The process seemed a primitive one; probably the same plan was in vogue in the days of the Pharaohs.

But I saw occasionally a still more primitive method of

raising the water. At the mouth of a channel there would be fixed a long, narrow trough, which being worked in a 'see-saw' fashion alternately dipped one end into the canal, and then tilted its contents out at the other end. This very simple plan had the drawback of requiring a man to stand in the water to work the trough up and down.

When not working, the camels were tethered in the open under groups of palm trees, which seemed to be planted for the purpose, and afforded shade from the sun's rays; but were useless, and, indeed, not required for any other sort of shelter. In this strange country, where it is always warm, and rain rarely, if ever, falls, it is quite unnecessary to place the animals under cover.

As the evening drew on, we saw many camels so stabled, resting and enjoying their evening meal; while hundreds more, and crowds of natives passed along the canal path going from their daily labours. Sometimes small boats with great white sails were seen on the canal waters as they grew wider.

Nearer to Cairo the land grew more and more green and luxuriant. Egypt, wherever it can be cultivated, must have a very rich soil; for two crops can be raised off the land each year. When we saw the bountiful growth in the fields, we could better understand how the country can produce the revenue it does, in spite of the fact that it is in reality only a narrow strip of land that can be cultivated at all; the greater part of Egypt being merely barren desert.

IN THE COURT OF THE MEHEMET ALI MOSQUE, CAIRO

CHAPTER XXV

CAIRO—THE PYRAMIDS—TRIP TO THE BARRAGE AU NIL

At Cairo our party divided itself among three hotels, 'Shepheard's,' 'Continental,' and 'Eden Palace.' I was booked for the first-named, with C. J. W., S—— and a great many others. Although the time was a month or six weeks before the Cairo season, there had been such a rush of visitors from the many delayed liners at Port Said and Suez, that the hotels, which at that time were usually closed, had hurriedly opened and were nearly full of guests; and 'Shepheard's' had to turn many of our party away.

In consequence of this sudden accession of visitors, we had to put up with certain inconveniences not usually met with at such hotels, especially very indifferent waiting and attendance generally. We found it extremely hot in the town, where the temperature all day long had stood at 100° Fahr.

After an early breakfast next morning, S—— and I drove out to the Gezeh Pyramids. Everything was new and strange to us, and our ride proved a most interesting one. The wonderful Oriental life of the streets, so busy even in the very early morning, the crowds of natives with their asses and camels, the many fine buildings we passed, all gave an interest to the scene that fascinated us. S—— was enraptured, and wished he could live there for ever!

We drove by the museum and barracks, over the Nile

bridge with its great lions guarding either end, and so out into the long avenue that led to the pyramids. There most of the land on either side of the roadway was lying under water owing to the high Nile. Occasionally we saw belated crops of cotton, which had evidently not ripened in time for picking before the flooding of the river, looking like great snowfields rising out of lakes, with many natives working among them, knee-deep in the water.

We continually passed numbers of Arabs, with their many camels and asses laden with produce for Cairo, chiefly fodder or baskets of dates as far as we could see. This fruit was now just ripening on the trees. We also saw many baskets of green figs being carried to the markets.

Alighting close to the pyramids we were joined by others of our party, who had driven out as we had, and crowds of Arabs immediately beset us on all sides, eager to offer their services or proffer their wares. Unless the guileless visitor is careful, they will carry him off bodily, so determined are they to be employed. Declining these persistent and none too polite attentions, we made our way first to the Sphinx and then back to the Great Pyramid.

It is hardly necessary to describe these ancient relics in any detail, for this has been done over and over again in books on Egypt, and every one has seen pictures of them.

What struck me at first was an impression of immense age and solidity; I stood among the works of an old world —far removed from the common-place one in which we live now-a-days—where a people had laboured whose thoughts were not as our thoughts, and whose ways were

remote from ours. What seemed useless and bizarre to us was to them of most absorbing interest. Theirs evidently was not a world where everything had its commercial value, or was judged only for the price it would fetch, or they would never have spent so much thought, time, and labour upon these apparently useless objects. They placed such value upon them because they served purposes seemingly all-important then, but which now appear trivial. We had come from a hard-headed, grown-up world, to view the toys that interested a childish one of superstition and make-believe.

There can be little doubt that these pyramids were built for tombs. They rise from great squares sunk in the desert: and in the face of the rock, all round, numbers of small chambers had been hewn out, where these old people placed their noted dead. The pyramids were built, block upon block, of solid stone, the largest rising to a height of 454 ft., and they served in their inmost recesses as the last resting-places of the kings of the country.

Such care for the dead would never have occupied their time and energy to the extent that we know it did, had it not been for the grotesque and impossible doctrine of the resurrection of the body, which probably took its rise in ancient Egypt. The corpse was sacred in their eyes, and they lavished upon its care and preservation a world of thought and labour, which might have been so much more usefully employed in other ways.

But a use comes for everything if the world will but wait long enough, and who now-a-days would wish to blot out these relics of the past, with all the knowledge they bring to us of the life of these far distant times!

They stand as imperishable documents of an early, and simple-minded civilization, full of lessons for us now, if

we will but heed; documents probably far more lasting than the books of the twentieth century are likely to prove to our descendants of 5,000 years hence.

There they stood before us, rifled of those sacred contents for which they were built to be such permanent abodes; objects of curiosity to an age, the spirit of which those builders could no more foresee, than can our children anticipate the nature of that life which awaits them in maturity. The curiously preserved bodies, with which they were packed, lie scattered all over the world in many museums, to be the wonder of long ages yet to come, and a lasting lesson of the impotence of humanity when face to face with the grim destroyer—Death.

In sight of these marvellous and ancient relics, one wants to do nothing but get away from the modern world with its hollow shams, and be alone for a while with the remote past, to commune with the spirits of the dead and gone builders. But oh, the pity of it! To sit there and contemplate is absolutely impossible. The traveller does not come to think and ponder; he comes only as a prey to the multitudes of noisy, pestering, irritating, mercenary Arabs, swarming upon him like flies, and who cannot be shaken off.

Here they are with their horrid broken English, thrusting their sham wares before his eyes, and they do not understand the meaning of the word 'No!' Any protest on the visitors' part, however indignant, only encourages them to further exertions to extract from his pocket some of that money, which they seem to look upon as theirs by right. They offer for sale trumpery imitations of the wonderful works that embody the thoughts of the past, and which, if in a weak moment he is tempted to buy, he is certain to throw away in disgust a few hours later, when

he learns at the Cairo Museum that they are the crudest of modern imitations.

Were it not all so tiresome, and could one look on without being pestered oneself, it would be fun to watch these Arabs at work trying to extract that backsheesh, the dispensing of which they seem to think must be the sole object of the visitor's journey to the wonderful pyramids. While one dusky individual tries his powers of persuasion, a dozen others look on close by; and if by unexpected good fortune number one is got rid of, number two swoops down, hoping to succeed where his compatriot by his incompetence had failed. Behind him numbers three and four wait, ready for their turn to come round, and so the whole gauntlet of these human pests must be run. A moment for quiet contemplation is hopelessly impossible, and since it cannot be escaped the annoyance has to be endured.

The Sphinx did not impress me so forcibly as did the Pyramids. In the first place, it was not so large as I had expected, it was half buried in the sand, and it was far from perfect. Vandals in the past had chipped its ancient features into the merest caricature of a human face, staring with sightless eyes across the desert towards modern Cairo in the distance. Then again—I do not know why—but I had expected to find it of polished granite, and it was rough in the extreme, and its surroundings were incomplete. It was originally connected with the temple which has been excavated close by, but the shifting sands have so covered up both, that the true connection does not readily appear to the visitor.

Close by the Sphinx, I mounted a camel which for a quarter of an hour an Arab had pestered me to take. It was the best way to quiet his rasping voice and stop his persistent importunity. With its usual slow, deliberate

and swaying gait, the animal took me round the Pyramids, so that I could obtain a good view of them from all sides. It was as well that I took the animal, for its owner, although he fleeced me himself, took good care that nobody else did, and for a space I was free from the importuning crowd; while the ride saved me much toilsome trudging through the heavy sand.

My Arab was anxious to photograph me seated on the camel, and begged my camera for the purpose. Fearful that he might spoil it, I hesitated, but he assured me he knew the way to use it; had he not done it for all the Englishmen who patronized him? so I set the instrument and gave it to him, cautioning him to hold it steady when he squeezed the ball. His only answer was, 'I can do it, I do it often;' and the result was a fuzzy representation of what might have been a man, or a woman, and was probably myself; but this latter detail had to be taken on trust.

Behind the Great Pyramid I dismounted and inspected one of the rock tombs; but the day was far too hot to attempt the ascent of the Pyramid itself, although many of our younger members did so.

We drove back to Cairo for lunch, and in the afternoon made up a party of eight to drive round the town and view the bazaars, some of the mosques, and the Citadel.

As for the mosques the place was full of them; their tall, slender and graceful minarets could be seen in all directions, and many were very lovely indeed. One of the finest that we visited was the Mehemet Ali Mosque close to the Citadel, and designed after the style of St. Sophia in Constantinople. As we entered the couryard, we had to put on large yellow slippers over our boots, before we were allowed to tread the sacred ground. The appearance of these great things on our feet afforded us much amuse-

ment, and while we were admiring ourselves in them one of the photograhpic fiends of our party managed to snap-shot us.

In the centre of the outer court we saw a fountain of curious architecture, round which the faithful sit and wash their feet before performing their devotions. Inside the building we were much impressed by the beauty of its architecture; the whole surmounted by a great dome in the centre, similar to the one that 'hangs like a moon above the second Rome.'

Unlike Christian churches, the Mahommedan mosques are bare of decorations, altars, or anything that gives the least semblance of any sort of ritual. There is no priesthood attached to this religion, it being almost the only one that has in this respect retained the purity of its early beginnings. Christianity also started without a priesthood or any ritual, and in the course of centuries has elaborated both, and indeed in some cases to such an extent as to contravene the very spirit of its Founder's teachings. Ritual and priestcraft are, however, so contrary to the spirit of Islam, that both are abhorrent to its worshippers.

There are no seats in the mosques; but carpets are spread on the floor during worship, and the people sit or kneel on these; there are, however, fine pulpits to be found in most, from which the Koran can be read and commented upon.

Outside the Mehemet Ali Mosque, which stands very high, we obtained from a parapet a magnificent view of Cairo. In the distance flowed the mighty Nile and beyond it lay the great Pyramids of Gezeh. To our extreme left we saw the aqueduct of the ancient city, one of its few remaining works of five thousand years ago. Immediately below us were the tombs of the Mamelukes, while in front and to our right was the business portion of Cairo. When

the great city was seen from this splendid position and in the clear, dry atmosphere, a very fine idea of its extent could be obtained.

We found the Citadel held by English troops, and coming down we passed many on guard, in their familiar khaki uniforms, and exchanged greetings with them. These and a few that we occasionally passed in the streets were the only visible evidences of the British occupation of the country.

After driving through the town and visiting the bazaars, we crossed the Nile bridge to the further side of the river, where we sat on a terrace and had tea. Then in the fast-falling gloaming, we went some distance along the banks of the river before returning to our hotels.

The following day was Friday, and being the Mahommedan Sunday, the streets were quite gay with crowds of men dressed in their best clothes and red fezes on their heads. We found these latter very much worn in Cairo, and could not help admiring their bright appearance; though their usefulness hardly appealed to us, for they gave no shade from the hot, glaring sunshine.

The streets were a perpetual source of interest on account of the numbers of different types of people thronging them. Probably few towns in the world contain such a mixture of nationalities as are to be found in Cairo. For in addition to the many foreigners always in the place, the natives themselves form a very mixed community. There are the Copts, the Berbers—chiefly the lower classes—the Bedouins, the Fellahs—all these being Egyptians—and then large numbers of Armenians, also Turks, Greeks, French, English and other Europeans; and as though these were not varied and picturesque enough of themselves, one meets continually many of those strange people who are to be found all over Europe, and who owe their name to Egypt—

the Gypsies. Taken altogether, the populace forms a curious mixture as one sees them in the streets.

The language of Egypt is Arabic, which is the official tongue in all departments except those of war, public works, the customs and the railways, where English is used. In the town of Cairo almost any language passes, but I think French was most in evidence after the native dialects. The vehicles on the streets bore numbers, both in Arabic and English numerals, and we were soon able to understand the former characters, which appeared somewhat like our own reversed.

The fine Ezbikiyeh gardens close to Shepheard's Hotel, must have been laid out, I should think, by some French artist, for they were beautifully arranged, and reminded me of the style of the 'Buttes Chaumont' in Paris. There I spent an hour or two, admiring the many strange trees with which the gardens were filled. Among these were splendid specimens of the curious 'banyan' trees, with their wonderful subsidiary roots dropping down from the branches, and sometimes it was like wandering among a grove of trees to move among these roots. One lovely tree in bloom was new to me; it was about the size of a large chestnut and entirely covered with a mass of pink flowers not unlike small tiger-lilies, and of a delicate shade of colour. Looked at from above, as in one instance I was able to see it, the tree presented a very fine sight indeed.

After lunch, C. J. W—— and I went to Buloa, where we crossed the Nile by boat to the Ghezirah Palace on the opposite bank. In the season this is a branch of Shepheard's Hotel, but it was closed when we saw it. Surrounding it were beautiful gardens, where we strolled about for a while, until it was time to recross the river in order to catch a boat on the other side, which was going

to the Barrage au Nil, some twenty-three miles down the river.

The various aspects of Nile life, which we passed, gave us much to think of and talk about. At intervals we saw along the banks many of the water-wheels like those we had seen on our way to Cairo.

The crops growing on the land on either side of the river, and often coming right down to the water's edge, were wonderfully luxuriant; great fields of cotton in bloom, splendid stretches of plumed maize waving in the breeze; all of the most lovely green colour. Here and there were groves of date palms, with their fast-ripening fruit hanging in clusters of all shades of yellow and orange. The few houses on the banks were mostly mud-coloured, and far from handsome; but quaint and essentially Egyptian.

On the river itself we passed many of the picturesque Nile boats with their great white sails fastened to long, slender masts about a hundred feet high; which bent by their very length into graceful curves. Sometimes a boat had two of these sails, one on either side, balancing each other; and then it floated by us, looking like a gigantic bird skimming along the water with outstretched wings.

The current of the Nile running seawards was strong and rapid, and it was wonderful to see how these boats took advantage of the favourable wind to beat their way against the stream, owing to the strong propelling power of these great sails.

On arrival at the Barrage, our boat drew up against the bank of the river, planks were thrown out, and we landed among the bulrushes, or rather pampas grass, which grew in thick profusion everywhere. The thought of Moses and the pretty story of Pharaoh's daughter naturally filled my mind, as I pushed my way among the white, feathery

tipped grass. We seemed to have landed on the banks of some sort of public gardens or wood, and it was cool and pleasant to walk beneath the shade of the great, green trees to the site of the Barrage works.

These are immense barriers of masonry, which span the river and hold back the water from running away too quickly to the sea. The Nile divides just above the Barrage, so that both arms of the great river have thus to be barred up, with the result that the river on the upper side of the obstruction stood, when we saw it, some 6 or 8 ft. higher than on the lower side; and vessels had to pass through by locks, as on our canals. This extra height of water allows a great deal more of the fertilizing liquid to be used for irrigation purposes; the Barrage also counteracts materially the effects of any low Niles, with corresponding beneficial results to Egypt.

Here again, as at the Pyramids, boys and other natives pester one incessantly, and apparently for no reason whatever, because they cannot possibly render any services. Everything lies open to the view, and one does not require to be shown anything. One boy hovered about, teasing for backsheesh, what for we knew not, nor could he explain; but he made conversation almost impossible for us. At length he offered to go away for a piastre, and to get rid of him, I gave it, foolishly enough. Did he go? Not a bit of it. He must have another from W——; so at last we put on our severest looks, and threatened him with our sticks, when he cleared off.

Thus we saw the Barrage, and walked across it, afterwards strolling back to our boat, gathering pampas grass on our way.

CHAPTER XXVI

A DRAMATIC INCIDENT—CAIRO MUSEUM—SUEZ CANAL

WHEN we rejoined the steamer a fine bit of unexpected melodrama awaited us. A fat beturbaned Arab, of patriarchal appearance, dressed all in white, and accompanied by three wives, two subsidiary wives—as we learnt later on—and about seven retainers, came on board, and gave his porter for services rendered, a sum of money which the latter did not think sufficient.

Whereat he protested in most vigorous language, and with splendid gesticulation. He was a born actor and orator, and it was fine to see him, and hear his indignant protests. He held out his hands showing the coin, and protesting with a voluble rush of language worthy of a Demosthenes. Then he wept, tore his hair, rushed away a few yards, sat down on the ground, buried his head in his hands, and rocked to and fro in his misery. After a little of this, he sprang up again, returned to the gangway, and poured out another torrent of protests in such impassioned language that I thought he must have been robbed of a fortune at least. A lady near me, who understood Arabic, explained that all the fuss was about three piastres—seven-pence halfpenny—of which he considered himself defrauded.

The fat, stolid Arab, surrounded by his wives and train, stood on the deck, unmoved as a rock against which

BY THE BANKS OF THE NILE, EGYPT

the angry surf beats. He was a very rich man, the owner of large estates near Cairo, but he was not the one to give more than he considered right.

The show went on for about a quarter of an hour. Never once did the man on shore—for he dared not come on the boat—cease his passionate lamentations, or his splendid gesticulations and acting. He continued alternately to rage and weep until the boat had started; and for a long time after we had left, we could see him marching up and down in grand indignation, holding forth to those about him. That man was an instance of a round peg in a square hole. Brought up as an actor, he might have made a fortune, for his passion was the most perfect bit of acting and elocution it has ever been my fortune to come across, either on or off the stage.

The five ladies who were with the fat Arab, wore long black crêpe falls, to conceal their faces after the fashion of the country, so that we could not possibly see what they looked like. One of them had a baby with her, and the infant protested in a language which needed no interpreter, that it was quite time for its afternoon tea. Whereupon the mother borrowed an umbrella from one of the European ladies on board, and opening it, she ensconced herself behind while she fed the little one in comfortable privacy; 'one touch of nature makes the whole world kin.'

The sun set soon after the boat started, and it afforded us a magnificent spectacle seen across the broad expanse of water. The journey down to the Barrage had taken us an hour and a quarter for the twenty-three miles; but then we were travelling with the stream, which was a rapid one. Going back we made slower progress and were at least half-an-hour longer; and nearly the whole time in the dark by starlight. I could not help feeling contemplative, as

I sat by the side of the boat, gazing upon the swirling waters of this great and ancient river, which had been the scene of so many stirring events in the long distant past.

The vision of Cleopatra the beautiful, rose before me; and all the pomp and splendour of her luxurious court, her crowds of attendants and slaves, and he, the greatest slave of them all—Mark Antony her lover—seemed to pass in review before my mental gaze. I thought also of the mighty civilization that had developed by this river at a period so lost in the mists of antiquity that the age of Cleopatra seems but recent compared to it.

I thought how ancient Egypt had been the wonder of the world in its time, the mistress of a culture which, though simple and primitive, was in many ways far higher and juster than that to which some modern nations have yet attained. Where even now do we find in Europe such honourable laws regarding women as prevailed in the Egypt of 6,000 years ago? Where is the country in which she is more honoured than she was in those days?

She was then the mistress of her own house, her husband was but a privileged guest. She inherited equally with her brothers and had full control of her property, she could go where she liked, and speak with whom she wished, having the same rights and being treated in the same fashion as man, and it was as a woman, as a being equal in human dignity, that she was thus honoured. She could plead in the courts and practise the art of medicine. As priestess she had authority in the temples, as queen she might be the highest in the land. 'She remained,' says M. Maspéro, 'the beloved of her husband, and the mistress of the house.' 'Make glad her heart during the time that thou hast,' was the traditional advice to the husband. Even when she proved unfaithful—and the Egyptians had a high ideal of domestic relations 6,000 years ago—he was told, 'Be kind to her for a season, send her not away, let her have food to eat.'[1]

Compare this with the laws and practice of England even

[1] *The Religion of Women*, p. 14.

as late as fifty years ago, and what a difference do we find! And certainly prior to the nineteenth century there was not a European nation that could, in this respect, stand in the same category with ancient Egypt.

It was late before we reached Buloa, where we took a carriage back to our hotel, our minds fully made up that we had passed a most enjoyable afternoon.

I spent the greater part of the next morning in the museum, in company with some of our friends. It is a noble building, devoted almost entirely to exhibits of Egyptian antiquities. In one room was a magnificent display of gold and silver ornaments; lovely specimens, beautiful in design, perfect in workmanship, and priceless in value.

Up-stairs we saw the finest collection of royal mummies in the world, and notably among these were that remarkable trio Rameses I., Seti I. and Rameses II. The mummy of the last named was in a wonderful condition of preservation, the features showing almost as distinctly as they did in life; so that it seemed quite possible to gauge the character and disposition of this great monarch. The remark was frequently heard, 'What a benevolent look that man has!' for after all the enormous lapse of time since the life left that shrunken frame, his face still marvellously mirrored forth his soul.

Menephtha, the supposed Pharaoh of the Exodus, lay there in his glass case; a great lantern-jawed man with a hard-set mouth, and a face lacking much of the kindliness of expression that characterized Rameses II.

Two other mummies interested me; they had been recently placed in the museum and were as yet unnamed. They represented a man and a woman, both very well preserved, the lady's ears showing still the holes pierced for

then are often most interesting with their crowded and cosmopolitan styles of life.

We found on our return that notices had been put up in our hotels, stating that a special train was leaving Cairo for Suez the next morning, to take our party back to the *Durham Castle* in time to pass through the canal, which was now clear. We could either go by this train, or remain in Cairo a day or two longer, and meet the steamer at Port Said. Many of us had never been through the Suez Canal, and wished to have the experience; we thought also that it would be interesting to see the wreck of the *Chatham* and the destruction caused by the explosion of the dynamite; so nearly all the party decided to return to Suez.

Next morning, providing ourselves with plenty of fruit, which we purchased in the market before starting, we joined the train at the station. There our friend and physical drill-instructor, H. D. Ferrar, said good-bye to us, as he was not returning to Europe; and we also lost the company of Dr. and Mrs. Ruffer, who resided in Egypt; while a few members, who were pressed for time, had proceeded to Alexandria and there taken steamers home. We had all immensely enjoyed our trip to Cairo and wished the time had been longer. The Khedive had sent us his greetings and offered to place his private steamer at the disposal of the Association, an offer which we had been unable to accept on account of the shortness of our stay.

The sun was intensely hot during the return journey, but the air was more bearable, owing to the strong breeze that was blowing all the time, and we found the journey pleasant and interesting. Suez was reached about sunset, and we arrived on board the *Durham Castle* in time for dinner.

Our ship was in no haste to start, and did not make a move to enter the canal until past eight the following morning; owing to the number of steamers waiting to take precedence of us. When once we did start, we found the journey through the narrow channel very interesting. All vessels go along slowly—about five miles an hour —in order to safeguard the banks of the canal, which would be damaged by the backwash, if greater speed were attempted. The Suez end of the canal passes through the barren desert we had seen from the train, and mile after mile of this sort of scenery went by with monotonous regularity. At length, at one o'clock in the afternoon, we reached the Great Bitter Lake and dropped anchor; our pilot left us, and we saw that we were in for another long wait.

We were soon joined by a number of other ships that had been following us from Suez; one by one they entered the lake and lay-to alongside us; and there we waited all through the afternoon, until, when night came and the lights of the ships shone out on all sides across the quiet waters, the scene was a bright and pretty one. We made no move all night, and when the next morning dawned, we were still lying at anchor.

Going on deck before my morning's bath, I found that a ladder had been let down the side of the ship, and a few of our passengers were sporting in the lake. This was such an excellent idea that I at once joined them, and diving off the ladder, I was soon enjoying a most lovely swim in the warm and exceedingly buoyant waters.

After breakfast we watched two or three natives, who were swimming round the ship calling out for coins. They seemed to recover every one that was thrown, and being quite naked they had to use their mouths as purses in

which to stow away their gains. It was surprising how many pieces of silver they were able to hold in these receptacles, and yet keep on talking and calling out all the while. They never seemed to tire or require any rest, for they kept there all the morning, either swimming or treading water, when they were not diving or performing antics with one another. The extreme buoyancy of the water of course helped them in this.

More steamers came out of the canal from Suez and anchored near us, until soon there was quite a crowd of them waiting to go on. Among the new arrivals was the Orient liner *Orotava,* which came close to us and dropped anchor just ahead. This was the ship in which my brother and sister had gone out to Australia fifteen years ago, he to return home ten years later, and she, poor girl, to die there after one happy, but all too short, year of married life.

The day was intensely hot, and no one had much energy for anything but card-playing, and so we sat about and waited hour after hour all day long, and at sunset we were waiting still. Then as the night grew darker, we could see in the distance, far away across the shore, towards where the canal ran northwards, a faint glimmer of light, which slowly grew brighter. A long way behind it another appeared, and then another, until a chain of them were seen moving slowly towards us. These were the search-lights at the prows of the steamers coming southwards from Port Said; and we were waiting for them to pass out of the canal before we could enter in.

Each light was in sight for an hour or two before the ship to which it belonged entered the Great Bitter Lake. Slowly they came one after the other, a fine sight to see; but it was past ten at night before the last one left the

canal and our waiting vessels could make a move onwards. The rule of passage is that mail boats always take precedence, so two of these, albeit later arrivals than we were, started first, the Peninsular and Oriental liner *Malta,* and the Orient liner *Orotava,* while we entered the canal third.

The sight was most impressive, as we moved on. Our great search-light lit up the channel in front, and the banks on either side of us. Ahead were the lights of the two mail steamers, and following in our rear came a long string of vessels, a quarter of a mile between each one. It was a curious sight to see these great works of modern civilization, powerful ocean-going steamers, with their blazing electric search-flares, lighting up the vast stretches of barren Egyptian desert; a commingling of the modern with the ancient world.

The *Durham Castle* was still moving along the canal, when we rose the next morning, and on both sides of us, as far as the eye could see, stretched the same wide expanse of desert. Here and there great white patches of salt-covered land could be seen, where the sea, flowing over and afterwards evaporating, had left the sodium grains on the soil. Sometimes great flocks of pinky-white flamingoes were in sight, and now and then an Arab, riding on his camel, passed across the sandy waste. From the ship of the ocean, we gazed upon these ships of the desert, and wondered at the contrast.

By half-past seven we came in sight of the remains of the wrecked steamer *Chatham,* and passed it just before breakfast at eight. There was very little to see, for the heap of scrap-iron lying half out of the water close to the shore did not much resemble a ship. Just below the water, we could make out several broken spars and parts, which had to be avoided by careful steering. But what interested

us most was the enormous damage the explosion had wrought on the banks of the canal. More than five hundred yards had been torn out, and an immense quantity of earth displaced. When it is remembered that over ninety tons of dynamite exploded, the marvel is that the canal was not completely wrecked.

Two hours later we reached Port Said and there anchored for a while. Close by us the two liners had already started coaling; but this was a process that we did not need to undergo, fortunately, for it is one that does not add to the comfort of the passengers. It is at best a dirty business, although it is an entertaining pastime to watch the crowds of dusky natives, carrying the coal-laden sacks up the inclined gangways to the steamers.

Port Said, at the Mediterranean end of the canal, is a large and important-looking town, with plenty of life and bustle in its streets. It seems a thriving place, and its position is one of great value at the head of the highway to the East. We should have been glad of the opportunity to go on shore, but our stay was too short to allow of this. The few friends we had left in Cairo joined us, and we were soon on our way once more. As we steamed out of the harbour we had a splendid view of the long sea-front of the town, where fine residential buildings faced the Mediterranean.

Halfway out of the harbour, we passed on our left a colossal statue of M. Lesseps, the great Frenchman to whose skill and enterprise the world owes the Suez Canal.

CHAPTER XXVII

MEDITERRANEAN—STROMBOLI—MARSEILLES—HOME

THE *Durham Castle* was once again out at sea and right glad were its officers, who, accustomed to the open Atlantic route of the west coast of Africa, had chafed greatly at our long delay, and the week's enforced idleness. In spite of a strong and delightfully cool breeze, the sea was as smooth as ever.

It was now Wednesday, October 12, and the Captain told us we should reach our next stopping-place, which was to be Marseilles, on Tuesday the 18th. So we had a week before us in which to play off those sports and competitions which had been voted impossible during the heat of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. At Marseilles a large number of the party intended to leave the ship and proceeded overland to England *via* Paris.

The weather being much cooler, we all entered with zest into the many competitions that had been arranged. They were much the same as on the outward voyage, only this time I had the pleasure of carrying off two of the prizes.

The first land in the Mediterranean that we saw was the island of Crete, on which Mount Ida was clearly visible in the distance. Then we came in sight of Sicily and Italy, and one evening, had a splendid view at sunset of Mount Etna, which stood out boldly against the red and rather angry-looking sky. Later in the evening we passed through the Straits of Messina, where the lights of Reggio

on the one side and Messina on the other shone out very prettily.

Captain Moseley had arranged that, when Stromboli came in sight, we were to be called up, provided there was anything to see; so at half-past two on the Sunday morning, the steward knocked at my cabin-door; and going on deck I found a number of passengers sitting about, watching the dark cone-like mountain, which rose abruptly out of the sea about three miles off. We waited for ten minutes before anything occurred, and then suddenly the top of the mountain began to glow, and flames and masses of white-hot rocks and stones shot up into the air to a height of some five hundred feet.

Looking through our glasses, we could see the glowing lava falling down the mountain side. The display lasted scarcely half-a-minute and then all was dark once more. About fifteen minutes later it began again, and during the hour or so that I watched, there were no less than five eruptions, the third being a very fine one indeed. The appearance of the volcano when in action was like a huge chimney fiercely on fire.

Thus this wonderful mountain goes on vomiting rock and lava at frequent intervals, sometimes more violently and sometimes less, and it has been doing this throughout historic times. The very mountain itself has apparently been formed inch by inch in this way and is still growing.

The night was not an ideal one for watching, or we might have remained longer. The air was chilly, rain began to drizzle, and the vessel moved more than some of us liked, so all but the most enthusiastic returned to their beds at the end of an hour.

The next morning we were in the Straits of Bonifacio and obtained a splendid view of its very fine scenery. To

our left were numbers of rocky islands, barren and uninhabited, save when some lighthouse guarded their dangerous shores. Beyond rose up the high mountainous mainland of Sardinia. To our right lay the island of Corsica, with its still higher ranges of mountains. The sun was shining brightly, a brisk breeze blowing, and the air was delightfully cool; indeed, out of the sunshine it was almost cold. In front of us, in the centre of the straits, and rising sheer out of the water, with its base upon a submerged rock, was a lighthouse, and many others marked the coast on either side of the Channel; a very necessary precaution, for the straits require careful navigation.

We were steaming between two world-renowned islands; to our right rock-bound Corsica, the birthplace of that remarkable military genius, Napoleon Buonaparte, the arbiter of the destinies of Europe; to our left Sardinia, the home, in his later years, of Garibaldi, the liberator of Italy. The one had striven to place a continent in fetters beneath his feet, the other had fought to banish tyranny from his native land, and to make her a united and glorious country. We were glad to get such a fine view of these two historic islands.

Later on in the day the air became so cold that our warmest wraps were necessary, and still we shivered; so we went to bed early to get warm. The wind blew furiously during the night, howling round the front of the vessel, where my cabin was situated; and when morning dawned the sea was covered with foam-crested waves, and it was almost impossible to fight one's way along the deck. We were close to the French shore and near to Marseilles, waiting for a pilot to take us into harbour; and he, coming on board soon afterwards, speedily brought us to an anchorage in one of the Moles. Later on we were visited

by the health officer of the port, an old man who did not trouble to come on board, but merely looking at us, passed us as healthy, and we were then free to land.

A large number of our members were leaving us at Marseilles, in order to return overland to England. Among those whom we now lost were Professor Darwin and his family, T. S——, my cabin companion and friend, and many of our professors, who were anxious to be back to their classes, the voyage having already proved longer than they had anticipated.

A few of us made up a party and spent the morning driving about the town and seeing the sights. Marseilles is too near home and too well known to need any detailed description. Of course we visited the Cathedral, Museum, Fountain and Zoological Gardens, but as our time was very short we could scarcely do more than see the exteriors of some of these places. We all were anxious to ascend to the church of Notre Dame da la Garde, from which a fine view of the town and country could be obtained. We went by an *ascenseur* to the top of the hill on which the church was built. The situation was indeed superb, but the interior of the church was too full of tawdry decorations, quite spoiling any beauty it might have possessed.

Visitors come to this place, not for what they can see inside, but for the view outside, which is indeed magnificent. The whole city of Marseilles, and the hills and mountains lying beyond, stretched like a glorious panorama in front of us; to our left were the fine harbour and docks, while behind us was the beautiful, blue sea, dotted with islands, among which plainly discernible were the picturesque Isle and Château d'If. The morning was bright and sunny, the air clear and translucent, so that details could

be seen a very long way off, and we could not refrain from going into raptures over the magnificent prospect.

A strong cold wind was blowing all the time. Does it always blow at Marseilles, I wonder? It did so when I was here last in 1900, and I remembered how my wife had been actually blown down on this very spot.

We had very little time to linger, and were obliged to return quickly to our carriages and to the Mole, where we took a boat to go off to the *Durham Castle;* thereby lighting upon an exciting adventure.

We had paid for return boat tickets when coming on shore, and naturally supposed that these would take us back without further charge. When we were well out in the harbour, the boatman refused to take them, saying they were given by another boat, which was not his. Thereupon followed an animated and amusing discussion with him in French, which language we none of us understood sufficiently well to argue in. The man was very good-natured over it all, but the result was that everybody had to pay another sixpence each, except myself. Why he exempted me, I do not know; he said I was 'mon ami,' and had nothing to pay. Not only so, but with a great deal of courtesy and flourish, he gave me a franc! which, however, I returned to him. It was all very funny and bewildering, for I only partially understood what he was driving at.

The *Durham Castle* left soon after lunch; the wind had moderated considerably by then, and the Gulf of Lyons was smooth. We had procured the latest English papers on shore, and it was delightful to get them so well up to date, for they were but two days old, whereas the last we had read had been quite a month behind. We were very sorry to read of Sir Henry Irving's death, of which we now

heard for the first time. I have always been one of his admirers, from the time when his 'Hamlet' fascinated me twenty-five years ago, and I had seen him act as 'Becket' at Drury Lane shortly before I left England for South Africa. He will be a great loss to the stage, and to the large circle of friends to whom he had endeared himself by his attractive personality.

The account of the fearful accident on board the Cunard steamer *Campania* in Mid-Atlantic, also appealed forcibly to us. While steaming along in a heavy sea, but apparently in perfect safety, a huge wave had struck her, and instantly washed five persons overboard and injured thirty-seven others. And yet we had done 14,000 miles on the ocean, without even seeing waves that could be called in any sense rough; we felt we had much to be thankful for.

I now had cabin 12 to myself; I missed my companion with whom I had shared so long and so amicably, still it was nice to have plenty of room to move in. We seemed to be quite a small party on board, but we grew more sociable in consequence. The weather became milder as we went south again, and our warm clothing had to be discarded once more.

On the afternoon following the day we had left Marseilles, we sighted the island of Iviza, one of the Balearic group, and soon afterwards we saw Capa San Antonio on the Spanish coast; after which we did not lose sight of land again, until we were well out in the Atlantic ocean.

The voyage down the coast of Spain was exceedingly interesting, and by the aid of large maps we were able to recognize every place we passed. The further south we went, the more mountainous the scenery became, and during our last day in the Mediterranean we had some splendid glimpses of the Sierra Nevada range with its

great, snowclad peaks. Some distance from Gibraltar, we saw once again the coast of Africa, on our left, as the sun was setting.

Just then, one of our very sharp-eyed ladies exclaimed that she could see a spot on the sun. I fetched my field glasses, and placing a spoilt photographic film across them to shield my eyes from the glare, I looked at the great burning ball, and there right in the centre of the disc was the spot she had seen. It must have been of enormous size to be so easily detected with the naked eye. About this time a strong head-wind sprang up and the sea became rougher; it made walking on the deck difficult, and the waves buffeted and shook the vessel as they struck; but did not otherwise affect her motion.

A progressive whist tournament had been arranged for the same evening. Lady Crookes was delighted to be the winner of the ladies' prize, while Professor W. H. Hudson was surprised to find himself ahead of all the men. After it was over, we went on deck and found ourselves under the searchlights of Gibraltar. Two were playing upon us all the time, keeping us in view as though rather doubtful of our identity, for Union Castle liners are not generally seen in the Mediterranean. Soon afterwards we passed Europa Point and then the lights of Gibraltar opened out before us, while some distance ahead we could see Algeciras, the little Spanish town where the conference on Morocco was shortly to be held. To our left the lights of Ceuta in Morocco were discernible in the distance.

The next morning we were on the great Atlantic, nearly opposite to Cadiz, but well out of sight of land. The ship had completely circumnavigated Africa, and was once again on the route of her outward journey. The wind had fallen, the sea was smooth, and except for a shower during the morning the weather was delightfully sunny and fresh.

At three in the afternoon, we passed Cape St. Vincent and signalled to the shore.

The Cape is a fine, bold, but not very high headland, and we were able to notify by cable from thence the probable time of our arrival at Southampton. A great four-funnelled English cruiser passed us soon after, and there was great excitement, for everybody thought she must be the *Renown* going out to Genoa, to take the Prince and Princess of Wales to India; but we found on referring to the dates that this could not be so. We flew our blue ensign and saluted and she dipped her flag in return.

The *Durham Castle* pitched and rolled a little towards nightfall, and dark, heavy clouds followed the setting sun, betokening possibly some rain later on. However, for the next twenty-four hours the weather kept fine and sunny. Finisterre was sighted at ten o'clock on the Saturday evening, and then we crossed the Bay of Biscay, which, to keep up its reputation, gave us the following day, the nastiest time of our whole voyage; for when we rose on our last Sunday morning, the sea was considerably rougher, and rain fell nearly all day. A very strong north-east wind was blowing, and the waves striking the ship sent showers of spray on deck, obliging us to keep well under cover.

The ship pitched and rolled slightly, and this increased as the day wore on, causing several passengers to feel ill; consequently there were gaps in the saloon at meal times. It did seem strange to end a voyage of nearly 15,000 miles by feeling seasick, owing to a little movement. The good old *Durham Castle* behaved splendidly, however, and kept her balance so well that we did not, even on this occasion, need our fiddles during meals. Had she been a smaller boat, the day would have been a very unpleasant one, for we could see the waves sweeping right over the decks of

several steamers that we passed. Towards the afternoon, it looked as if we were in for a nasty, rough night, for the wind increased in violence and the waves became larger.

The evening was too cold, wet and uncomfortable to stay out on deck, so I sat in the smoking-room and had a talk with Sir William Crookes about psychical research. He thought that the balance of the evidence, so far verified, pointed to the probability of life after death; but this was only an inference and not a certainty. The existence of powers in ourselves, unused by, and apparently independent of, our bodies and our external life, also pointed, he thought, to the same conclusion. He considered that the recognition of these powers, by a considerable minority of scientific men at the present day, was a great step forward towards solving a problem of such immense difficulty.

The following day—our last at sea—was fine and cold, the wind had fallen in the night, the sea was not nearly so rough, and the sun was shining brightly; but it was necessary to wear thick clothing and to keep on the move, for we felt the cold very much. During the day we were all busy at times in our cabins, packing up and generally getting ready for shore, for we were due to reach Southampton by daybreak the next morning. We were, however, delayed somewhat; for during the night we ran into a dense fog, and were obliged to keep the horn blowing all the time, and when day dawned on Tuesday, October 24, it was impossible to tell where we were, for the fog was so dense we could see nothing around us.

By the time breakfast was over, the mist had cleared away and we then found ourselves in dock. A special train waited on shore to take us on at once to London. We had returned to England after an absence of three months; and we were full of excitement at the thought of seeing our homes and loved ones once more.

When Professor Darwin, in his address at Cape Town, alluded to our trip as the greatest picnic on record, we did not then know how fine a picnic it was going to be. We knew that we had a splendid time before us, but the reality surpassed our expectations. Wherever we went, we were treated with the utmost kindness and hospitality; every arrangement that thoughtfulness could devise was made for our comfort; opportunities were given, such as we might otherwise never have had, of seeing all that there was to be seen, and learning all that our hurried visits allowed us to learn.

It had been a wonderful journey from first to last, for in the course of our wanderings we set foot upon the soil of no less than three foreign countries, five of our own colonies, and three British protectorates. With the exception of the short distance of coast from Durban to Beira, we actually circumnavigated the whole of the great continent of Africa. By sea we went nearly 15,000 miles, on shore we travelled over an extent of country half as large as Europe. The trip was intensely interesting, the lessons it taught us were many, the impressions we brought away with us will be food for reflection for a lifetime. Our warmest thanks are due to our kinsmen in South Africa, who helped to make our trip to their continent such a delightful and enjoyable picnic.

THE END

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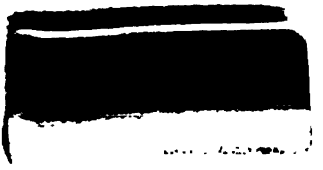
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